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**Let us die fighting : the struggle of the Herero and
Nama against German imperialism (1884-1915)**

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Let us die fighting : the struggle of the Herero and Nama against German imperialism (1884-1915)

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Horst Drechsler

"Let Us Die Fighting"

Explanation of title:

"Let us die fighting", the title of this book, is a quotation from a letter sent by Samuel Maharero, Supreme Chief of the Herero, to Hendrik Witbooi, Chief of the Nama, in early 1904. In it he repudiated his earlier collaboration with the German imperialists and urged Witbooi to forget their peoples' past differences and join together against German rule. Had the message reached its destination, had Witbooi been inclined to listen and joined the war of liberation against German colonialism from the beginning, the defeat and subsequent genocide of both the Herero and Nama peoples might have been averted.

Cover photograph: This shows Chief Hendrik Witbooi, chief of the Nama, during their war of liberation against the German colonial administration.

“LET US DIE FIGHTING”

The Struggle of the Herero and Nama
against German Imperialism (1884–1915)

HORST DRECHSLER



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Preface

by Sam Nujoma, President of SWAPO

The social order which the Namibian people are fighting to overthrow is a product of a century of brutal colonial oppression and exploitation. It is essential, therefore, that those who are seeking to bring about a fundamentally new social order in Namibia should understand fully the events which helped, in the last hundred years or so, to shape the present social order in that country. Society is only fully intelligible when it is studied in terms of its history and of the economic, social, political and spiritual factors which helped to form it.

Without a sound grasp of those past events which lie behind the present difficulties in our country, Namibian revolutionaries and patriots would not be in a position to formulate appropriate strategies for the dismantling of the prevailing social order as well as for its replacement. However, while the need to study our people's past is recognized, much of the time and energies of Namibian revolutionaries and patriots is consumed in the liberation activity of our country such that our scholars are not now in a position to conduct in-depth studies of our society. Therefore, contributions by progressive scholars or scientists to a new and reliable literature on Namibia, beyond the existing racist genre, are to be appreciated. Much of the existing literature on Namibia is from the pens of apologists of the colonial system imperialism, i.e. colonial officials, pro-imperialist missionaries and other European fortune seekers.

It is against this background that I wish to commend Dr. Horst Drechsler for his illuminating historical study of the gallant struggle which the Namibian people, in the southern and central parts of our country, waged for 31 years (1884–1915) against German colonialism. The study is significant in many respects.

Firstly, the study is significant because of its impressive originality. Covering quite extensively and exhaustively the entire period of German colonial domination in our country, Dr. Drechsler's study constitutes, to my knowledge, one of the most, if not the most, significant contributions to the understanding of that important period in the history of Namibia. The facts and figures which Dr. Drechsler has brought to light are, indeed, massive. Equally significant is the fact that Dr. Drechsler's research findings are almost entirely based on primary sources, i.e. the archival files of the German Imperial Colonial Office in Berlin. This is one

of the aspects which have made the study of special significance. Drechsler's interpretation of the facts and figures which his study has uncovered is incisive in such a way that the nature and scope of German colonial brutality against the Namibian people is laid bare for all those who care to read the book. Furthermore, the heroism, mistakes and agonies of the Namibian people in those moments of acute crisis are graphically described. Dr. Drechsler's study is thus comprehensive without being superficial.

Secondly, proceeding from the vantage point of Marxist scholarship, and basing his analysis on the method of materialist dialectics, Dr. Drechsler has, in my view, succeeded in explaining the fact that, contrary to the notion popular among bourgeois historians that German colonial expansion was merely a result of Otto von Bismarck's whimsical desire to find Germany "a place in the sun", that expansion took place on the initiative of Germany's banking merchant capitalists. He points out that, typical of capitalism in a transition from free competition to imperialism, these banking merchant capitalists, who had by then not yet fully merged with industrial capitalists, were interested mainly in quasi-monopolistic land concessions in the colonies. In Namibia, he argues, it was the discovery of diamonds in Western Griqualand in 1870 which gave the impetus to land speculations by Adolf Luderitz, the first German banking merchant to acquire extensive land ownership in Namibia by 1883. The area over which Luderitz acquired land ownership is geologically related and adjacent to Western Griqualand. He saw potential for diamonds, copper and gold mining in the area.

It was, Dr. Drechsler says, Luderitz's acquisition of that extensive land ownership in the southern part of the country which provided the basis for Bismarck to declare South West Africa a German Protectorate on 24th April, 1884. In this way, the German flag followed German merchandise rather than the other way round; and this shows that, while it is true that Bismarck's concern with imperial prestige to "find Germany a place in the sun" had played a role Germany's colonial expansion, it was the economic interests of the German merchant capitalists which formed the primary motive behind that expansion.

In the words of Drechsler, Adolf Luderitz epitomized an imperialist type of merchant bent on founding a large German colonial empire in the interests of German imperialism. His overall objective was to use the German colony of South West Africa as a springboard for a larger and, preferably, territorially contiguous German empire extending, according to Bismarck, "from Namaland to the Congo". Luderitz was, however, beaten to that imperialist goal by John Cecil Rhodes.

Thirdly, Dr. Drechsler's study has also exposed, with sufficient clarity, the reprehensible role which German missionaries had played, first, in assisting Luderitz and other German merchant capitalists to gain land concessions through fraudulent concession agreements and, second, in enticing the German Reich to extend "protection" to Namibia. He shows also, in great detail, how instrumental these missionaries were in manipulating Namibia's traditional leaders to conclude the

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so-called treaties of protection with the colonial agents of German imperialism in the period between 1885 and 1890.

The fourth significant point is that the study has also provided great insights regarding the sort of social formation which was assuming dominance in Southern and Central Namibia at the time German colonialism was being imposed. Drechsler suggests, with a measure of persuasiveness, that at that time the country was going through a process of important social change. The tribal communities were breaking up, giving way to the emergence of relatively larger, aristocratic feudal states. From this standpoint, he presents the struggle for territorial supremacy between Nama and Herero chiefs, not in terms of so-called internecine tribal warfare, but in terms of the conditions of a feudal state in the making, whereby one group, with stronger instruments of coercion and better organized military power, imposes its own control over those of the tribal authorities. It was, therefore, mainly due to the fact that the attentions of those forefathers were focused on that struggle for the establishment of a single, dominant centre of power in the territory that German imperialists were able to seize the opportunity to strengthen their administrative and military presence in the country during those first eight years of colonialism. That is to say that, in the period between 1884 and 1892, our Herero and Nama forefathers had still not yet come face-to-face with the fact that the fundamental political problem in the country was no longer the conflict between the two communities but one between the indigenous people and German imperialists. This historic mistake of our forefathers did, in the end, spell disaster to the Namibian people, and it should provide a useful lesson to the Namibian liberation fighters of today.

The fifth point which deserves mention is that Drechsler's identification of the emergence of a feudal social formation in the country at that time when German colonialism was being imposed shows also that, contrary to many of the racist and undialectical theories which say that, prior to the imposition of colonialism African societies were stagnant, there was, indeed, an internal process of historical change occurring in accordance with the laws governing social development. Tangential notice a useful theoretical approach to the political economy of Namibia.

Coming back to the problem of unity, Drechsler shows that by 1892 it had as this point may be regarding the major theme of Drechsler's book, it brings to became clear to the leaders of the two communities that the threat which German imperialists posed to their independence was much more serious than the conflict between themselves. It was in the light of this realization that the Hereros and the Namas finally signed a peace agreement in November of that year. They did so in order to jointly confront the new situation which had arisen with the German penetration of the country. Dr. Drechsler also points out, quite correctly, that the establishment of peace between these two sections of the Namibian people was a landmark event in the history of Namibia in the sense that it led to a realignment of forces with the result that both the Hereros and the Namas were now turning their swords on the German imperialists.

The sixth respect in which Drechsler's study broadens our knowledge of the period under consideration is the detailed account of the manner in which the land and cattle of the Hereros and the Namas were systematically and unscrupulously expropriated by the German colonialists, especially in the period between 1893 and 1902. This expropriation was carried out with such great intensity that by 1903 the economic life of these two communities was in total ruin. This economic ruin was accompanied by the relegation of the Hereros and the Namas to a status of political rightlessness.

Against this background, Drechsler points out that this particular period was marked by intense struggle against German imperialism. There was, he says, hardly a year that passed without armed conflicts taking place between the Namibian people and the German colonialists.

By documenting so thoroughly how that ruthless expropriation finally drove those two communities into one of the bloodiest, if not the bloodiest, uprising in the annals of anti-colonial resistance, Drechsler has also helped to demonstrate, at least to Namibians, the scientific validity of dialectical materialism, i.e. that in a class society political events are due to the conflict of social forces caused by man's material needs. He explains that the 1903-1907 Herero/Nama uprising (carried out as a series) was but a desperate rearguard action aimed at regaining the lost material means of subsistence. That action was, however, doomed to failure because it was taken against an unequal and far more deadly armed foe. He makes it explicit, nonetheless, that the Hereros and Namas had no other alternative but to rise up in arms.

Drechsler's graphic exposure of the appalling cruelty with which General Lothar von Trotha carried out his notorious extermination campaign against the Hereros and the Namas is very moving, despite the fact that notoriety of that extermination campaign is well documented elsewhere. This is in itself a strong recommendation that the book should be widely read and carefully studied, particularly by Namibians in whose minds the consequences of von Trotha's extermination campaign are still very fresh.

The sordid suppression of that great anti-colonial uprising brought to a close, the author points out, the process of dispossessing the Hereros and Namas; and he shows that this dispossession was an essential prerequisite for reducing these people to the status of rightless, wage labourers. In other words, having been forcibly expropriated, the Hereros and Namas were prevented from becoming free wage labourers. On the one hand, they were not free to dispose of their labour power as their own commodity; and on the other hand, they had no other commodity left to sell. This was the abnormal process by which the two communities were forcibly proletarianized.

Here, too, Drechsler has thrown up useful theoretical hints towards a class analysis of the Namibian society. This is yet another very good reason why Namibian revolutionaries should find time to read the book.

Another distinct mark of originality in Drechsler's study is the way in which he

has presented the Namibian people as true actors in that gruesome confrontation with German imperialists. The Namibian leaders' acumen and shortcomings in making or failing to make appropriate political and military decisions in those moments of severe trial are well described and compared with those of the German colonial administrators and military officers. Unlike so many of the bourgeois studies of the so-called primary resistance movements, Drechsler's is not a story of passive Africans being acted upon by a powerful European imperialist state. Nor is it an account of mere primitive, tribal chiefs impulsively reacting to the pressure of imperialist onslaught. On the contrary, his is a illuminating portrait of prominent leaders, some of whom possessed the best of political shrewdness and military genius equal to any in the world. Similarly, those weak Namibian leaders who were lacking in either bravery or imagination are also depicted in their true light.

This original approach will help Namibian patriots to identify who among the past and present leaders of our people may enter the list of Namibia's national heroes. This is an important matter in fostering a sense of Namibian national history among our people; and I have no doubt that when the identification is made, names such as that of Jakob Morenga will be placed in that glorious list. Finally, the epilogue which Dr. Drechsler has provided has added to his study a degree of completeness such that those who would care to read the book to the last page will gain a very good knowledge of, not only the struggle of the people of South West Africa against German colonialism, but also of present-day Namibians in the crucible of a national liberation struggle against South Africa's illegal occupation of our country today.

It is in the light of the foregoing that I believe that Drechsler's study constitutes a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge on Namibia; and it is for this reason that I strongly recommend that all those who wish to understand better Namibia and its people, their past and present problems as well as their future prospects, should not only read it but read it carefully. However, if I have committed an error in confining my remarks to the positive side of the book, others should feel free to criticize it; and I am sure that Dr. Drechsler will be able to respond to his critics open-mindedly.

Sam Nujoma
Luanda, Angola
April 1980

Introduction

The focus of Africa's struggle for independence is increasingly shifting towards the south of the continent. One of the territories still under colonial rule is Namibia or, as it used to be called, South West Africa. After the First World War it was entrusted to the Union of South Africa under a League of Nations mandate, and after the Second World War it was placed under the trusteeship of the United Nations. However, the Union of South Africa declared that the mandate had expired with the dissolution of the League of Nations, tacitly incorporating the territory as a fifth province of the Union. Protests from the United Nations notwithstanding, this situation has remained unchanged to the present day.

The position in which the Namibians find themselves is made particularly difficult by the fact that they are up against two adversaries who are allied with each other: their present and their former colonial masters. On the one hand, they are faced with the racist regime in the Republic of South Africa which has applied most of its criminal *apartheid* laws to Namibia and, on the other, with the German settlers. Although the latter now account for only roughly one third of the total white population, they control 70 per cent of the country's economic life.¹

In this battle on two fronts, publications recalling the great traditions of the Herero and Nama struggle against German imperialism before the First World War can be of great help to Namibians in their struggle for political independence since their enemies of old are still their enemies today. This explains the considerable interest which the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) evinces in such works.

Unlike the Africans, the white settlers in Namibia are apprehensive of anything conjuring up the struggle of the Herero and the Nama against German imperialism. Why this is so emerges quite clearly from an article in the German language periodical *Der Kreis* published in Windhoek. In its March 1961 edition, it said that such studies should be rejected as they would "place an additional strain on the relationship between black and white which is tense enough". For this reason the white settlers in Namibia decreed that "the question as to who is to blame for the events of 1904 should henceforth be considered a matter of purely academic

interest."² Whether they are of German or South African extraction, we cannot, however, do them the favour of adopting such an approach.

If the national liberation movement in the countries under colonial rule and the collapse of the imperialist colonial system is considered to be the most important landmark in world history after the October Revolution of 1917 and the emergence of the world socialist system, this places progressive historians under the obligation not only to study the national liberation movement and the collapse of the imperialist colonial system in the second and third stages of the general crisis of capitalism, but also to expose the hated policy of colonialism whatever its guise. In recent years Marxist historians in the German Democratic Republic have come up with a number of studies analysing the colonial policy of German imperialism before the First World War on the basis of the files of the Imperial Colonial Office. In so doing they helped Africans in a very specific way, contributing to a national sense of history. In recalling the great traditions of the African peoples' struggle against imperialism they dispelled a myth that had been carefully fostered by the imperialists: that Africans have no history of their own.

At the same time, such contributions are very relevant today given that West Germany, affecting relief at shedding the burden of its colonial legacy, has gained a foothold in Africa by resorting to neo-colonialist methods.³ It is common knowledge, however, that the German Empire did not give up its colonies of its own free will. Rather it lost them as a result of the First World War, the drive for a redistribution of colonial possessions having in fact been one of the causes of that conflict. Because German colonial rule, reflecting the extremely aggressive nature of German imperialism, had particularly disastrous consequences, Marxist historians in the German Democratic Republic make a special point of exposing the colonial policy of German imperialism. They are well-equipped to undertake this task as the files of the Imperial Colonial Office are in the possession of the GDR. As a rule, no written records of the Africans are available to document their struggle against imperialism. So the archives of the imperialist colonial administrations are frequently the only source enabling us to reconstruct the history of Africa's people under imperialist domination. Of course, it should not be forgotten for a single moment that these are records of the colonial masters, the enemies of the African people. But since these documents were not intended for publication, the colonialists tended to give a fairly unvarnished account of the situation in the colonies.

Anyone reading studies by GDR historians on the colonial policies of German imperialism will notice that the historical place accorded to the German colonial policies of the 1880s and '90s remains a matter of dispute. The question is whether the beginnings of German colonial expansion should be attributed to the pre-monopolistic (i.e. pre-imperialist) phase of colonial policy or, possibly, to a transitional stage. While a majority of historians take the view that what is involved is an imperialist type of colonial policy, a writer on economic history who is a disciple of Jürgen Kuczynski has recently suggested that the beginnings of Ger-

man colonial expansion should be seen as part of a pre-imperialist colonial policy.⁴ In this Introduction I will examine these two propositions, using the colony of South West Africa as an example, to help clarify this theoretically important problem.

There is agreement among all Marxist historians who have dealt with German colonial history that, either from the outset or after a brief transitional period, big business interests and notably large banks were the principal economic factors behind German colonial expansion in the last two decades of the 19th century. At the same time as the merchant Adolf Lüderitz's "purchases" in South West Africa, cessions of land were also obtained by Hanse- mann and Bleichröder.⁵ Predictably, Lüderitz's financial resources were inadequate, so his "acquisitions" passed into the hand of big business interests as early as 1885. Hermann Münch, in his biography of the banker Adolf von Hanse- mann, wrote that it was the latter who "together with the Disconto-Gesellschaft and the banking establishments of S. Bleichröder in Berlin and Sal. Oppenheim jun. & Co. in Cologne intervened to save South West Africa for Germany."⁶ South West Africa was "saved" by the founding of the German South West Africa Company (Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft für Südwestafrika), which took over Lüderitz's acquisitions in late April 1885.

Developments followed a similar pattern in German East Africa where, after a short transitional period, penniless "patriots" such as Carl Peters were forced out of the German East Africa Company to be replaced by big business interests.⁷ By contrast, in the Cameroons the principal figure had always been Adolf Woer- mann who was not so much a Hanseatic merchant as a representative of the Disconto-Gesellschaft.⁸ As far as New Guinea is concerned, the case is crystal clear as, right from the beginning, it was exclusively the affair of Hanse- mann, Bleichröder and their ilk.⁹

The correct premise that even in the early stages of German colonial expansion big business interests and, especially, large banks played a decisive role¹⁰ has led numerous historians to the false conclusion that the colonial policy of that time ought therefore to be described as imperialist. Such a proposition cannot go un- challenged: any analysis of German colonial policy in the late 19th century must be based on the well-known five criteria of imperialism which Lenin enunciated in *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. It goes without saying that these five points are inter-related, and it is mistaken to argue, on the strength of just one or two of these criteria, that imperialism has set in. As a matter of fact, one decisive feature was lacking in the 1880s: the merging of industrial and bank capital. Jürgen Kuczynski observed on this score: "It was only at a later stage that the industrialists increased their influence in the banking sector. Hence one may not speak of complete interpenetration and of a unified monopolistic oligar- chy directing both industrial and banking concerns until the turn of the century."¹¹ Nor could there be any question of the export of capital to the German colonies during those years. Neither had the world yet been divided completely among

the major capitalist powers, so there were no grounds for a struggle in the 1880s for a redistribution of their spheres of influence.

The period from 1870 to 1900 is that of capitalism's transition from free competition to imperialism. It is, of course, difficult to say exactly when the transitional period ended. The year 1894 may be considered *terminus a quo* and the year 1900 *terminus ad quem*. Problematic as it is to ascribe economic changes to a particular year,¹² it is relatively easy to determine the boundary line in the realm of political history. Here the year 1898 appears to mark the end of free competition and the onset of imperialism. At the international level the Spanish-American War signifies the beginning of the struggle for the redivision of the world, but for Germany's colonial history it is the conquest of Kiaochow in November 1897 and the secret Anglo-German pact of August 1898 on the partitioning of the Portuguese colonies that mark a qualitatively new and higher stage of capitalism. Since all highly developed countries reached the phase of imperialism more or less simultaneously,¹³ there is no reason to assume that Germany's imperialist colonial policy became established much earlier, in the 1880s.

There is another important aspect which has been overlooked by the advocates of the theory that German colonial expansion was imperialist from the start: the methods of exploitation employed by big business interests in the German colonies during the 1880s and '90s were anything but typical of monopoly capital.¹⁴ In South West Africa, for example, the exploitation of the colony in a way characteristic of monopoly capitalism did not begin until the turn of the century when railways were built and ore and diamond deposits opened up. Between 1884 and the end of the century the capitalists were content with the ownership of vast stretches of land. The German South West Africa Company owned land covering an area of 240,000 square kilometres. When the company had spent all its liquid assets in a matter of years in an abortive search for gold and diamonds, it lapsed into a state of immobility. The wealthy shareholders of the company might easily have invested large sums in South West Africa, but nothing seems to have been further from their mind. The same pattern emerges from an analysis of the situation in the other German colonies.

The attitude of the big capitalists towards the German colonies raises the question of the motives behind their colonial policy. It should be borne in mind that the '80s were marked by a relative abundance of liquid resources.¹⁵ Since the capital requirements of German industry were still comparatively modest at the beginning of the '80s, the amount of capital invested abroad in 1884-85 – these being years of depression – was much larger than that invested in Germany. In the late '80s, however, this trend was reversed. As the power industry made rapid headway in Germany, the major German banks increasingly switched their attention to financing the domestic economy. From 1888 to 1900 the assets held within the country far exceeded those held abroad, and this automatically limited the resources available to large German banks for investment elsewhere in the world.¹⁶

Consequently, it was the economic situation at the beginning of the '80s that

was responsible for the colonial policy of big business. It was characteristic of the personal views of Hansemann, Bleichröder and others about the correct colonial policy to be followed that their ideas were all rather vague and imprecise. Hansemann felt that colonies gave their possessors an advantage over their competitors.¹⁷ Presumably, historical memories of the big joint-stock companies established overseas¹⁸ and the huge profits they yielded on the Stock Exchange played a certain role in such considerations. Helmut Stoecker deserves credit for having drawn attention to Engels' statement that colonial policy was practised as a kind of stock-jobbing.¹⁹ Engels expressly mentioned Hansemann and Bleichröder in this context.²⁰ This brings us back to the central point at issue, especially as Lenin clearly underlined the pre-monopolistic nature of the Stock Exchange.²¹ When in the late 1880s the big banks found lucrative ways of putting their money into German industry, their interest in the colonies declined for a while. The well-known result was that, until the turn of the century, there was no German capital available for the German colonies.

Both the advocates and the opponents of the theory that imperialist colonial policy started in the 1880s argue that the character of Germany's colonial policy turns around whether it was the desire for raw materials or the drive for export to the German colonies which was uppermost in the minds of the big capitalists. Manfred Nussbaum, for example, writes that "the raw materials argument is totally eclipsed by the export argument", concluding from this "that in terms of economic objectives, early colonial policy was predominantly pre-monopolistic."²² By contrast, his critics maintain that from 1882 or so the call for raw materials was paramount in ruling-class circles. A critical investigation of both propositions shows that neither is sound. The problems involved must not be considered on the basis of statements by individuals, but on the strength of the actual figures about raw material imports from the German colonies and exports to these territories. The picture that emerges is quite clear: neither played any role in the '80s and '90s. This is primarily true of South West Africa, but also, *mutatis mutandis*, of all other German colonies.

In the first half of the '90s stock-jobbing was still the chief form of business transaction involving the German colonies. A Hamburg lawyer, J. Scharlach, who ranks among the biggest speculators in German colonial history, raked in huge profits by founding a large number of companies. In a memorandum sent to the Colonial Department he made it clear in no uncertain terms that he could find capitalists to finance his projects only "if entrepreneurs are granted far-reaching concessions and quasi-monopolistic rights". In the same memorandum he summed up his views about colonial policy in the following words: "Because of the experience I have gained during the last few years I am convinced that a vigorous development of our colonies is impossible as long as pride of place is given to ideals and patriotic considerations, however desirable these may be. These may be suitable for firing the imagination of the masses and kindling a romantic desire for colonies, but not for securing the capital that is required. To those who are

prepared to put their money into such a venture one must hold out the prospect of a substantial profit. As I see it, the money invested in a colonial possession such as South West Africa will either be lost if our hopes that the country is rich in natural resources and suitable for development are disappointed sooner or later, or it will be multiplied many times over if these hopes are wholly or partially fulfilled. To find out to what extent this is possible, one should study the history of the colonies of other nations such as the British and the Dutch. This will show that they capitalized their property at 100 times its value or more."²³ It is interesting to note that about 70 years later, in January 1960, one Dr. Pirkham, director of the Deutsche Bank and a representative of the (West) German Africa Society, made virtually the same points to attract German capital for investment in Africa.²⁴

German colonial policy in the 1880s and '90s is a colonial policy of the transitional period between the capitalism of free competition and imperialism.²⁵ Although its principal features are those of a pre-imperialist colonial policy, it can be classified as neither unequivocally pre-monopolistic nor imperialist. It was originally instituted by big business in order to consolidate the economic base of monopoly capital in its infancy,²⁶ but these expectations were only fulfilled after the turn of the century.

Now I should like to make a few observations regarding the subdivision of South West Africa's history into periods in the years between 1884 and 1915.

The first stage, lasting from 1884 to 1892, is characterized by the fact that both the Herero and the Nama failed to realize that the coming of the Germans had changed the situation in South West Africa. The changes were hardly discernible in the '80s because the presence of the German colonial masters was limited to a handful of Imperial civil servants. The Herero and the Nama continued the battle between themselves for supremacy in South West Africa as though there were no German colonialists in the country. It was not until the early '90s, when more and more German soldiers were despatched to South West Africa and the Imperial Commissioner Heinrich Goering and Captain Curt von François began to interfere openly in their affairs, that the black population began to look upon the German colonialists as their chief enemy. The result was that the Herero and Nama, after having been locked in struggle throughout the 19th century, made peace at the end of 1892 in order to meet the new situation created by the German penetration.

The second stage, comprising the period from 1893 to 1903, opened with the German raid on Hornkranz, marking the beginning of the war against the Witboois. Between 1893 and 1903 the land and the cattle of the Herero and Nama passed gradually into the hands of German settlers. Since the South West Africans did not meekly put up with expropriation, the period 1893-1903 was one of bitter struggle by the Herero and Nama against German imperialism. The common feature of their resistance was, however, that it took the form of uncoordinated local uprisings which their colonial masters found relatively easy to crush.

Governor Theodor Leutwein pursued a shrewd policy of divide and rule, playing off Africans against Africans. When the construction of the Otavi railway was undertaken in 1903, it became clear to the Herero that their expropriation was about to be consummated.

The third stage covers the period from 1904 to 1907 during which the great rebellions of the Herero and Nama took place, born of sheer desperation. The outcome of the conflicts was hardly in doubt, given the Germans' superiority in weaponry and their possibilities of unlimited supply. So it was all the more surprising that the South West Africans offered heroic resistance for such a long time that the military prestige of their German oppressors began to wane. The war against the Herero and Nama was the first in which German imperialism resorted to methods of genocide, thus earning unenviable notoriety in later years.

The crushing of the great Herero and Nama uprisings marks the beginning of the fourth and last stage of South West African history under German colonial rule. This lasted from 1907 to 1915. It was only now that the German imperialists achieved their aims of transforming South West Africa into a German colony where they had a completely free hand and of relegating the Herero and Nama to the status of forced labour. This was also the period that witnessed the initial stages of the emergence of a working class in South West Africa. For the Herero and the Nama those were years of no rights and ruthless exploitation. For German monopoly capital it was an all too brief period in which they were able to reap handsome extra profits. South West Africa's monopolistic exploitation by German imperialism came to an abrupt end in 1915 when the colony passed into the hands of Great Britain, later becoming a territory mandated to the Union of South Africa.

A large number of books have been written about South West Africa under German colonial rule. One might ask, therefore, why another should be added to this list. Unfortunately, the quality of the books published to date is much less impressive than their quantity. Almost all of them are from the pen of colonial officials, army officers, farmers, missionaries and explorers. With a few notable exceptions, they provide subjective accounts of South West Africa that are of little value, if any, to the scholar.

Among the large output of books about South West Africa under German colonial rule a handful stand out as deserving attention. The role of Lüderitz is particularly well documented. Wilhelm Schüssler's biography of Adolf Lüderitz²⁷ is the only treatise on South West Africa that is based on documentary evidence. It recounts the colonizing of South West Africa from 1883 to 1886. It is only too evident that Schüssler's purpose was to write a eulogy of his uncle, so that anything that did not suit this intention was passed over in silence or altered.²⁸ A collection of files constitutes valuable additional material shedding light on Lüderitz.²⁹

Much less literature is available to document the period after the land acquired by Lüderitz had been transferred to the German South West Africa Company

(1885). The only source is a book by Ludwig Sander³⁰ who did little more than sing the praises of the company. In his two thick volumes he confined himself to relating the official story of the company's operations, thereby disguising its real policies and practices – after all, this was what he was paid for by the company.³¹

The period 1889–93 is covered by Curt von François³² and the subsequent eleven years (1894–1904) by Theodor Leutwein.³³ While the authors, both of them chief administrators of the colony, were mainly concerned to justify their actions, their works contain much illuminating material.

The great uprisings (1904–07) are the subject of numerous books in which German participants in these wars relate their experiences in South West Africa. This kind of literature holds no scientific interest at all. A publication by the General Staff³⁴ sheds some light on the military side of the uprisings. No reliable account is available of the closing years of German colonial rule in South West Africa (1907–15), and the memoirs of the last governor, Theodor Seitz,³⁵ yield very little. The same goes for a number of works dealing with the long period of South West African history between 1884 and 1915, such as the numerous books written by Kurt Schwabe³⁶ and Karl Dove.³⁷ Wilhelm Külz³⁸ offers a synthesis of all literature on South West Africa published up to 1909. Finally, Paul Rohrbach,³⁹ a settler-imperialist with a middle-class background, has criticized official colonial policy for the way it favoured real estate companies.

All the literature that deserves attention among the plethora of publications about South West Africa under German colonial rule has one thing in common: it describes the history of South West Africa from the point of view of the colonialists. The Africans, inasmuch as they are mentioned at all, are seen merely as the object of a historical process. So it is hardly conceivable that this kind of literature should furnish a clear picture of the situation in which the Africans found themselves and of their struggle against colonialism.

After the Second World War there were some modest attempts in West German academic circles to come to terms with German colonial history. A case in point was the thesis on South West Africa between 1884 and 1903 published by Alfred Neubert,⁴⁰ a disciple of Professor U. Noack. However, Neubert's failure to make any significant contribution can be attributed to his relying exclusively on the secondary literature described above.

With the restoration of the old power structure in West Germany all criticism of German colonialism, however timid, ceased completely. Instead, there appeared in 1955 a book from the pen of the former deputy governor of South West Africa, Oskar Hintrager.⁴¹ At a time when the imperialist colonial system was already on its last legs, he had nothing but praise for German colonialism.

Hintrager's book is a strange one in many respects. It stands to reason that a man who between 1906 and 1914 served as head of the colonial administration and as deputy to the Governor in office and who was very well acquainted with the Imperial Colonial Office's files about South West Africa might be expected

to enlarge substantially our body of knowledge about South West Africa in the period under review. Indeed, as can be clearly seen from the files of the Imperial Colonial Office, Hintrager played an important and frequently sinister role in South West Africa in the period from 1906 to 1914. Yet almost nothing of this is mentioned in his book, which consists of two parts. The first covers the period from 1884 to 1906. Since he did not spend these years in South West Africa he can offer no more than a rehash of the literature referred to above, chiefly relying on Schüssler, François and Leutwein. Between 1906 and 1914, the years Hintrager spent actually in South West Africa, the peace of the graveyard reigned there. The great rebellions had been suppressed, with only sporadic incidents still occurring, the Herero and Nama had been largely annihilated, and the survivors had been pressed into forced labour. Not surprisingly, Hintrager sees things in a different light. He considers this the actual beginning of the colony's most glorious period. However, what he tells us about that period can only be classified as a friendly chat about South West Africa. While Hintrager's book was acclaimed as a work of great erudition in the West German *Historische Zeitschrift*,⁴² Helen F. Conover of the Library of Congress described it more aptly as a "popular narrative account".⁴³

It should be added that, whereas West German historians ignore German colonial policy completely, West German ethnologists do take up the subject from time to time. Katesa Schlosser, lecturer in ethnology at Kiel University, deserves special mention. In an article published in the West German *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, she gave an account of her visit to a Herero settlement in Bechuanaland.⁴⁴ Without explicitly saying so, she clearly suggested that, since the number of Hereros in Bechuanaland was estimated at 5,000 in 1936, a greater number of Hereros must have succeeded in fleeing across the border during the uprising than had previously been assumed. In other words, she played down the annihilation of the Hereros by the German colonial power. As is discernible even in the language used,⁴⁵ Katesa Schlosser is fully committed to a colonialist position; it is certainly not for nothing that she was granted a research scholarship by the Union of South Africa.

While all the secondary literature examined here appears to be of little value, there is one book which furnishes a fairly authentic picture. Significantly enough, this particular work has been systematically ignored by German authors. I am referring to the British Blue Book entitled *Report on the Natives of South West Africa and Their Treatment by Germany* (London 1918). Let us first look at the origins of the report.

After the troops of the Union had occupied South West Africa in 1915, the Administrator charged two army officers with drawing up a report on the treatment the South West Africans had received at the hands of the Germans. The apparent purpose of the report was to document the Germans' incompetence as colonialists, thereby ruling out a possible return of South West Africa to Germany. To achieve this aim the two officers did not have to invent anything. Rather, it

was quite sufficient to give a faithful account of the realities of German colonial rule. In undertaking their task they were able to rely on the captured files of the German colonial authorities. Especially important was the fact that they interviewed numerous surviving Africans. To round off their report, they consulted secondary literature about South West Africa.

The two army officers submitted their report in 1918. Despite some shortcomings,⁴⁶ it provided the first uncoloured account of German colonial domination in South West Africa and its consequences. Its origin, however, made it easy for the German imperialists to dismiss it as mere propaganda. Within a year of its publication the Imperial Colonial Ministry hit back with a report entitled *The Treatment of the Indigenous Population in the Colonial Possessions of Germany and England* (Berlin 1919). Characteristically, it makes no attempt at disputing the facts listed in the *Report*, but instead enumerates the crimes perpetrated by the British in their own colonies, setting off one atrocity against the other. Only now that we can check the *Report* for accuracy on the basis of the records of the Imperial Colonial Office, does it emerge clearly that the Blue Book is a largely reliable account that comes much closer to the real situation than all preceding German accounts put together.

The *Report* was prepared at a time of intense rivalry between the imperialists in Africa. When a few years after the First World War German, British and South African imperialists joined forces to oppress the Africans, the *Report* became an embarrassment. Therefore, at a session on 29 July 1926, the South West African Legislative Assembly adopted the following resolution:

"It is the opinion of this House:

1. That the Blue Book of the Union of South Africa, entitled *Report on the Natives of South West Africa and Their Treatment by Germany* (Prepared in the Administrator's Office, Windhoek, South West Africa, January 1915; Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, August 1918, London; Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office), submitted in time of war, merely has the importance of an instrument of war and that the time has come to put an end to this instrument and to remove and destroy all copies of this Blue Book found in official files and in public libraries of this territory;
2. That the Administration be requested to make representations to the Government of the Union and to the British Government about removing this Blue Book from the official files of these Governments;
3. That the Administration be requested to consider the advisability of making representations to the Government of the Union and the British Government about removing and destroying all copies of the Blue Book found in public libraries of the countries concerned and in the official bookstore mentioned on the title page, namely His Majesty's Stationery Office and E. Ponsonby, Dublin."⁴⁷

Thus, the *Report* that was casting a shadow over cooperation between German and British imperialism in South Africa was tacitly relegated to oblivion with

one stroke of the pen. The "honour" of the former German masters of South West Africa had been saved.

Before concluding my survey of the literature available, I must mention a book published in the GDR in 1952: Maximilian Scheer's *Schwarz und Weiss am Waterberg* (*Black and White in the Waterberg*). Written in journalistic style, it gives a vivid description of the Herero struggle against German imperialism, the author's attitude being one of profound sympathy for the just cause of the African people. Needless to say, this writer has also consulted all relevant newspapers and periodicals such as the *Deutsch-Südwestafrikanische Zeitung*⁴⁸ the official *Deutsche Kolonialblatt*,⁴⁹ the *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung*⁵⁰ as well as colonial almanacs⁵¹ and periodicals.⁵²

Let us now consider the question of files. With the sole exception of the Lüderitz files, all the records of the Imperial Colonial Office remained inaccessible to scholars and students until 1955. In the Kaiser's day there could be no question of evaluating this material as it was strictly confidential. Under the Weimar Republic and the Nazi regime the authorities were not interested in an investigation of Germany's colonial past because it was feared this might be detrimental to claims for the restitution of the colonies. After the Second World War all important official records in Germany were confiscated by the Allies. As the first of the victor powers, the Soviet Union began in 1949 to return the files found in German archives. The greatest amount of material (over 140,000 volumes) was handed back in 1955, the files of the Imperial Colonial Office being among it.⁵³ So these records became available for scientific purposes in 1956, and they have been housed in the Deutsches Zentralarchiv Potsdam ever since.

The bulk of the Imperial Colonial Office's files concerning South West Africa is material hitherto unpublished (always excepting the Lüderitz files). In isolated instances, reports by the Governor and similar material were published in the official *Deutsches Kolonialblatt*, but this was invariably in an edited form. This has made it necessary in almost all cases to go back to the original even when reports and other material had been published in the meantime. As well as using the files of the Imperial Colonial Office, this writer has also relied – though to a lesser extent – on the files of the Imperial Chancellery, the Reichstag, the German Foreign Office, the *Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft* and the Colonial Administration.

In conclusion, I should like to express my thanks to three scholars who encouraged me to write this work and helped me in many ways. It was George W. F. Hallgarten's book *Imperialismus vor 1914* that first prompted me to turn my attention to the files of the Colonial Office, and in a correspondence kept up over many years, he gave me much valuable advice. The late A. S. Yeruslimsky, whose seminar for junior scholars at the German Academy of Sciences I attended in the '50s, afforded me a deep insight into the nature of German imperialism. But I owe special thanks to W. Markov, who in many conversations heightened my understanding of modern history in general and focussed my attention on

colonial history. So it was almost axiomatic that he should agree to help me with my undertaking, ever ready to proffer advice with unflagging interest throughout the long years it took me to complete my work. For this I am deeply grateful.

Horst Drechsler, 1966

Notes

- 1 Cf. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 25 Sept. 1956.
- 2 Der Kreis, *Afrikanische Monatshefte für Pflege des Heimatgedankens und deutsche Kultur*, Vol. 4, 1961, p. 91.
- 3 Cf. Drechsler, Horst, 'Zum Eindringen des westdeutschen Neokolonialismus in Afrika', in *Westdeutscher Neokolonialismus. Untersuchungen über die wirtschaftliche und politische Expansion des westdeutschen Imperialismus in Afrika und Asien*, Berlin 1963, pp. 9 ff.
- 4 Cf. Nussbaum, Manfred, *Vom „Kolonialentbusiasmus“ zur Kolonialpolitik der Monopole. Zur deutschen Kolonialpolitik unter Bismarck*, Captivi, Hohenlohe, Berlin 1962, *Studien zur Kolonialgeschichte und Geschichte der nationalen und kolonialen Befreiungsbewegung*, edited by Walter Markov, Vol. 8.
- 5 Cf. *Die grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914* (hereafter referred to as GP), Vol. 4, Berlin 1927, No. 750.
- 6 Münch, Hermann, *Adolph von Hansemann*, Berlin, 1932, p. 246.
- 7 Cf. Büttner, Kurt, *Die Anfänge der deutschen Kolonialpolitik in Ostafrika*, Berlin 1959, pp. 77 ff. *Studien zur Kolonialgeschichte und Geschichte der nationalen und kolonialen Befreiungsbewegung*, edited by Walter Markov, Vol. 1.
- 8 Adolf Woermann was a member of the Disconto-Gesellschaft's supervisory council from 1885. Cf. *Die Disconto-Gesellschaft 1851 bis 1901. Denkschrift zum 50jährigen Jubiläum*, Berlin 1901, p. 272. That Woermann's operations were widely ramified and international is underlined by the fact that Alfred Beit, one of Cecil Rhodes's closest business associates, was a shareholder of Woermann's firm. Cf. Brackmann, Karl, *50 Jahre deutscher Afrika-schiffahrt*, Berlin, 1935, p. 57.
- 9 Characteristic of this was a statement quoted by Hansemann's biographer: „During the morning hours, before going to the bank, Adolph Hansemann ordered the affairs of New Guinea.“ Münch, Hermann, *op. cit.*, p. 243. Cf. also *Die Disconto-Gesellschaft 1851 bis 1901, op. cit.*, pp. 227 ff.
- 10 This fact is also admitted by Nussbaum, Manfred, *op. cit.*, pp. 141 ff.
- 11 Jürgen Kuczynski, *Studien zur Geschichte des deutschen Imperialismus*, Vol. 1, 2nd, revised edition, Berlin, 1952, p. 147.
- 12 Lenin said on this point: "Needless to say, of course, all boundaries in nature and in society are conventional and changeable, and it would be absurd to argue, for example, about the particular year or decade in which imperialism 'definitely' became established." Lenin, V. I., 'Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism', in *Selected Works*, Moscow 1968, p. 233.
- 13 Cf. Richter, Siegfried and Sonnemann, Rolf, *Zur Problematik des Übergangs vom vor-monopolistischen Kapitalismus zum Imperialismus in Deutschland*, in *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 1963, Part 2, Berlin 1963, p. 42.

- 14 Cf. Nussbaum, Manfred, *op. cit.*, p. 144. Lenin observed on this score that "the capitalist colonial policy of previous stages of capitalism is essentially different from the colonial policy of finance capital," Lenin, V. I., *op. cit.*, p. 228.
- 15 Cf. Münch, Hermann, *op. cit.*, p. 194. There was still a distinct lack of capital in the 1860s. Cf. Helfferich, Karl, *Georg von Siemens. Ein Lebensbild aus Deutschlands grosser Zeit*, Vol. 1, Berlin, 1923, p. 202.
- 16 *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 184 ff.
- 17 Cf. Nussbaum, Manfred, *op. cit.*, p. 59.
- 18 Cf. Kulischer, Josef, *Allgemeine Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*, Vol. 2, Berlin 1954, pp. 299 ff.
- 19 Cf. Stoecker, Helmuth, ed., *Kamerun unter deutscher Kolonialherrschaft*, Vol. 1, Berlin 1960, p. 18.
- 20 Cf. Engels, Friedrich, 'Der Sozialismus des Herren Bismarck', in Marx and Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 19, Berlin 1962, pp. 169 ff. A close study of the files available confirms the leading role of Hansemann and Bleichröder in the '80s. The Deutsche Bank did not play any role in the colonial business at that time. Cf. Helfferich, Karl, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 186. It was not until the late '90s that the Deutsche Bank threw itself into colonial business on a vast scale.
- 21 Cf. Lenin, V. I., *op. cit.*, pp. 194 ff.
- 22 Nussbaum, Manfred, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
- 23 Zentrales Staatsarchiv der DDR, Potsdam, Imperial Colonial Office (hereafter referred to as Imp. Col. Off.), No. 155, pp. 144-63, Scharlach's memorandum of Jan. 1893.
- 24 Cf. Pirkham, O. G., 'La contribution de l'économie allemande au développement de l'Afrique', in *Communautés et Continents*, April-June 1960, pp. 20 ff. Cf. also Meunier, Georges, *Bundesrepublik und Afrika*, in: *Wiso*, 3/1960, pp. 106 ff., and Drechsler, Horst, Review of P. Gache and R. Mercier's *L'Allemagne et l'Afrique*, Paris 1960, in *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* (hereafter referred to as ZfG), Vol. 9., 1961, p. 1899.
- 25 Lenin observed on this point: "When the Colonies of the European powers, for instance, comprised only one-tenth of the territory of Africa (as was the case in 1876), colonial policy was able to develop by methods other than those of monopoly - by the 'free grabbing' of territories, so to speak. But when nine-tenths of Africa had been seized (by 1900), when the whole world had been divided up, there was inevitably ushered in the era of monopoly possession of colonies..." Lenin, V. I., *op. cit.*, p. 260.
- 26 "Monopoly has grown out of colonial policy." *Ibid.*, p. 259.
- 27 Schüssler, Wilhelm, Adolf Lüderitz, *Ein deutscher Kampf um Südafrika 1883-1886. Geschichte des ersten Kolonialpioniers im Zeitalter Bismarcks*, Bremen, 1936.
- 28 To furnish an example: Schüssler completely ignored the implications of the assertion that the coastal strip acquired stretched inland for 20 geographical miles. The records accessible to Schüssler clearly show, however, that Lüderitz deliberately deceived the Bethanie people by substituting geographical for English miles. To gain a foothold in South West Africa Lüderitz had supplied the Africans with large quantities of weapons. Later this fact was carefully forgotten or played down. Schüssler arbitrarily changed the number of rifles supplied from 200 to 60. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
- 29 *Die Erschließung von Deutsch-Südwestafrika durch Adolf Lüderitz* (hereafter referred to as *Die Erschließung*). *Akten, Briefe, Denkschriften*, edited by C. A. Lüderitz, Oldenburg, 1945, *Abhandlungen und Vorträge*, edited by der Wittheit zu Bremen, Vol. 16, No. 1.

- 30 Sander, Ludwig, *Geschichte der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft für Südwestafrika von ihrer Gründung bis zum Jahre 1910*, two volumes, Berlin 1912.
- 31 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. No. 1535, p. 109, Minutes of the 91st meeting of the Supervisory Council of the Ger. SWA Co., 4 Sept. 1911. One passage reads: „At its request, the Board is hereby unanimously empowered to publish the history of the Society written by Dr. Sander of the Army Medical Corps . . . as soon as the Board has reviewed the work once again with a view to alterations that might be necessary. The fee to be paid to Dr. Sander will be fixed later.“
- 32 François, Curt von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika. Geschichte der Kolonisation bis zum Ausbruch des Krieges mit Witbooi*, April 1893, Berlin 1899. The account given by François is rounded off by Bülow, F. J. von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika. Drei Jahre im Lande Hendrik Witboois*, Berlin 1896.
- 33 Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, Berlin, 1906.
- 34 *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika, auf Grund amtlichen Materials bearbeitet von der Kriegsgeschichtlichen Abteilung I des Grossen Generalstabes* (The study of the General Staff), two volumes, Berlin, 1906-07.
- 35 Seitz, Theodor, *Vom Aufstieg und Niederbruch deutscher Kolonialmacht*, Vol. 3: „Die Gouverneurjahre in Südwestafrika“, Karlsruhe, 1929.
- 36 Schwabe, Kurd, *Mit Schwert und Pflug in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, 2nd edition, Berlin 1904, and, by the same author: *Der Krieg in Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1904-1906*, Berlin 1907, *Im deutschen Diamantenlande. Deutsch-Südwestafrika von der Errichtung der deutschen Herrschaft bis zur Gegenwart (1884-1910)*, Berlin, 1910.
- 37 Dove, Karl, *Südwestafrika. Kriegs- und Friedensbilder aus der ersten deutschen Kolonie*, 2nd edition, Berlin 1896, and *Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, 2nd edition, Berlin, 1913. Karl Dove achieved notoriety with his remark that „leniency towards the blacks is cruelty towards the whites“. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
- 38 Külz, Wilhelm, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika im 25. Jahr deutscher Schutzherrschaft, Skizzen und Beiträge zur Geschichte Deutsch-Südwestafrikas*, 2nd edition, Berlin 1909.
- 39 Rohrbach, Paul, *Südwestafrika*, Berlin, 1907, *Deutsche Kolonialwirtschaft*, Vol. 1. Rohrbach wanted to see the „Boer system“ applied to the Africans who, he felt, should not be taught to write and to read. *Ibid.*, p. viii.
- 40 Neubert, Alfred, *Die Schutzherrschaft in Deutsch-Südwestafrika 1884-1903. Eine Untersuchung zum Wandel kolonialer Herrschaftsformen im Zeitalter des aufkommenden Imperialismus* (thesis), Würzburg, 1954 (typewritten manuscript).
- 41 Hintrager, Oskar, *Südwestafrika in der deutschen Zeit*, Munich, 1955.
- 42 Cf. HZ, Vol. 181, 1956, pp. 727 f.
- 43 Conover, Helen F., *Africa South of the Sahara. A selected, annotated list of writings 1951 to 1956*, Washington, 1957, p. 170.
- 44 Schlosser, Kateta, „Die Herero im Britisch-Betschuanaland-Protektorat und ein Besuch in einer ihrer Siedlungen: Nwe-le-tau“, in *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Vol. 80, No 2 1955, pp. 200 ff., and *Eingeborenkirchen in Süd- und Südwestafrika, ihre Geschichte und Sozialstruktur*, Kiel, 1958.
- 45 As an example, she refers to Morenga as a „robber chief“.
- 46 The introductory chapters, for instance, contain a number of factual errors. Moreover, the general tone of the work betrays a tendency to idealize British colonial policy.
- 47 The text of the document is given in Schee, Heinrich, *Die koloniale Schuldfrage*, 7th edi-

- tion, Munich, 1927, p. 31. Cf. also Jacob, E. G. *Kolonialpolitisches Quellenheft. Die deutsche Kolonialfrage 1918 bis 1935*, Bamberg, 1935, pp. 25 ff.
- 48 *Die Deutsch-Südwestafrikanische Zeitung* was published in Swakopmund from 1901. It was the mouthpiece of the Ger. SWA Co.
- 49 *Deutsches Kolonialblatt*, Vols. 1, 1890, *et seq.*, edited by the Col. Dept of the Ger. For. Off. and (from 1907) by the Imp. Col. Off.
- 50 *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung*, Vols. 1, 1884, *et seq.*; mouthpiece of the DKG from 1888.
- 51 *Koloniales Jahrbuch*, edited by G. Meinecke, Vols. 1, 1888, *et seq.*
- 52 Cf. Bibliography.
- 53 Cf. Lötze, Helmut, *Die Bedeutung der von der Sowjetunion übergebenen deutschen Archivbestände für die deutsche Geschichtsforschung*, in *ZfG*, Vol. 3, 1955, pp. 775,

CHAPTER I

The German Penetration of South West Africa (1884-92)

The Peoples of South West Africa

South West Africa (Namibia) is one of the most inaccessible regions of Africa. Along the coast is the Namib, a sandy desert 50 to 70 kilometres wide, that makes it difficult to reach the interior, and in the eastern part the Kalahari desert has the same effect.

South West Africa is not the territory's name, but a description of its geographical location.¹ Within its boundaries, which were artificially fixed by the imperialists in the late 19th century, it contains—from north to south—Ovamboland, Hereroland (or Damaraland) and Namaland.

Even by African standards South West Africa is extremely sparsely populated,² but for once this is not attributable to the barbaric slave trade.³ As the names of the regions mentioned suggest, the principal population groups are the Ovambo, the Herero and the Nama.

The Ovambo⁴ can be more or less left out of consideration here because they remained outside the German sphere of influence throughout the era of German colonial rule in South West Africa. Indeed, their area has not become part of the so-called Police Zone to the present day.⁵ As a matter of fact, the area inhabited by the Ovambo was cut in two by the arbitrary delimitation of the border so that a part of them now live in Angola and the rest in Namibia. The Ovambo living in Namibia constitute the largest population group in that country. At the end of the last century their numbers were estimated at 100,000 to 150,000.

The central region of Namibia is peopled by the Herero who are a Bantu-speaking people just like the Ovambo. The Herero comprise the Mbandjeru⁶ and the Tjimba (or Tsimba).⁷ No accurate data are available about their numerical strength in the late 19th century. However, most experts⁸ agree that approximately 80,000 Herero inhabited the area at the beginning of German colonial rule in South West Africa.

The Herero are nomadic herdsmen who, unlike all other Bantu tribes, do not engage in crop raising.⁹ The soil was common property of the tribe. Yet, as Heinrich Loth rightly pointed out, it would be an oversimplification to classify the stage of socio-economic development which South West Africa had attained in the 19th century as primitive-communism.¹⁰ The tribal system was fast breaking up in

the 19th century, with an influential aristocracy typical to the early phase of feudalism assuming control of the tribes. The process of social differentiation had progressed so far that the contours of a class society had become clearly visible. The relationships of dependence that were emerging showed distinct traits of a feudal system of exploitation. However, this was not based on landed wealth, but on ownership of cattle, which was the chief form of private ownership of the means of production. Loth described the phase of social development briefly sketched here as the stage of transition to an early type of pastoral feudalism.¹¹

The region to the south of Hereroland is inhabited by the Nama,¹² or to give them their own name, the Khoikhoi.¹³ They are made up of the Nama proper¹⁴ and the Orlam tribes¹⁵ who entered South West Africa from across the Orange River as late as the beginning of the 19th century to escape annihilation by the Boers. The Nama, too, are nomadic herdsmen who do not till the land. In socio-economic terms, what has been said here about the Herero also applies to the Nama. The principal distinction between Herero and Nama at the close of the last century was that the latter's herds were much smaller and that, generally speaking, cattle did not dominate to the same extent as among the Herero. It is estimated that there were about 20,000 Nama towards the end of the 19th century.

Apart from the Ovambo, Herero and Nama one should also mention the so-called Bastards,¹⁶ the descendants of Boers and Nama women. Estimates put their number at the end of the last century at 3,000. There were also two communities living at various early stages of social organization: the Bergdamara¹⁷ and the San (or "Bushmen").¹⁸ Dependent on the Herero and Nama, they were estimated to number 30,000 and 3,000 respectively.

The Role of the Rhenish Missionaries

South West Africa's history in the 19th century was one of constant struggle between the Nama and the Herero, the object being the establishment of an early feudal state. Thanks to Heinrich Loth we are well informed about the sinister role played by German missionaries, members of the Rhenish Missionary Society active in South West Africa from 1842, in sabotaging the founding of a South West African state. Loth was therefore fully justified in stating that "South West Africa is a classic example of how the activities conducted by a Christian missionary society over several decades make it possible to paralyse a country's natural powers of defence and to pave the way for colonial subjugation."¹⁹

The Rhenish Missionary Society, which had hoisted the Prussian flag on its buildings in Otjimbingwe as early as 1864²⁰ first asked the Prussian Government for protection in 1868. Since a German colonial policy was out of the question at that time, the Prussian King decreed that the German missionaries in South West African state. Loth was therefore fully justified in stating that "South West Africa "gave assurances to this effect, but without any details being mentioned in the written records".²¹

In the middle of the 1870s the British Government and the Cape Colony authorities began to display an interest in South West Africa. They sent William Coates Palgrave, from the Cape Colony, to South West Africa as a special Commissioner to conclude treaties with the chiefs there in which they would acknowledge the suzerainty of Her Majesty's Government. Surprisingly, Maharero, Supreme Chief of the Herero, was quite willing to conclude such a treaty with Palgrave. He hoped Britain would afford him protection against the Boers²² who were making incursions into South West Africa in small bands, causing consternation among all Africans alike by the atrocities they committed. The Nama, on the other hand, rejected Palgrave's overtures out of hand. There even followed a rapprochement between the Nama and the Herero, the aim being a common stand against the Boers.²³ Unfortunately, these plans came to nothing.

The decisive factor enabling the British to extend their sway over South West Africa was the attitude of the German missionaries in the country, who felt that, if they were to be denied German protection, it would be better to enjoy British protection than none at all. It was for this reason that they supported the British penetration of South West Africa. After 1884 this attitude became an embarrassment so they tried to play it down or to deny it as best they could. However, the files of the Imperial Colonial Office contain a letter which the Inspector of the Rhenish Missionary Society, Dr. Friedrich Fabri, addressed to the German Foreign Office on 3 June 1880. In it he explained why the missionaries had opted for Britain. The letter reads in part: "Since the latter [the British Government-H. D.] were anxious to carry out the whole undertaking [the British occupation of South West Africa-H. D.] through persuasion and promises, preferably avoiding any financial outlay and especially any armed clashes with the natives, the execution of the operation largely depended, under the circumstances, on the attitude of the German missionaries. The latter asked for instructions from the Society's Executive. However regrettable it might seem that many years of pioneering work in the cultural sphere exclusively accomplished by German sweat and toil and at great financial sacrifice should merely have enabled the English to occupy the land with the greatest of ease, the state of affairs was such that a request to the German Imperial Government for protection of the country held no promise. [It is interesting to note that a question mark was placed beside this passage by someone at the Foreign Office. After all, this was in June 1880.-H.D.] Therefore, the Society's Executive respected the English occupation, despite the burdens it entailed, as a fact that was, on the whole, conducive to the common weal of the country and to its development."²⁴

By "common weal" Dr. Fabri obviously meant the interests of the mission. The year 1870 had seen the founding of the *Missions-Handels-Aktiengesellschaft*, a trading company whose capital stock attained 708,000 Marks in a matter of years, a handsome sum for a missionary society which, of course, wanted to see its money safeguarded. Incidentally, the *Missions-Handels-AG* specialized in the import of weapons and ammunition to South West Africa.²⁵

As it turned out, the British disappointed the expectations the missionaries had placed in them. Because of the British presence in Walvis Bay, the trade of arms of the Missions-Handels-AG had to be discontinued. Moreover, there could be no question of British "protection". Britain had officially taken possession of Walvis Bay in 1878,²⁶ describing it as British territory. But the kind of relationship which it maintained with the hinterland of South West Africa was not defined at all in terms of international law. This prompted the missionaries to give vent to their resentment in a confidential letter to the German Foreign Office: "The English officials keep repeating that the country has not been annexed nor has it been made a protectorate, so no one can define its new status in terms of international law."²⁷

In the late 1870s this situation led to a turnabout in the missionary society's policy towards Great Britain. It was initiated by the publication in 1879 of a book by the society's Inspector, Dr. Friedrich Fabri, entitled *Bedarf Deutschland der Kolonien?* (*Does Germany Need Colonies?*) which triggered a wave of agitation for the acquisition of German colonies.²⁸ From 1880 onwards the Rhenish Missionary Society openly called for German intervention in South West Africa.

Dr. Fabri, recalling the abortive efforts to secure German protection in 1868, used the good offices of the Vice-Chancellor Prince Otto von Stolberg-Wernigerode, whom he knew personally, to outline his plans about South West Africa to the German Foreign Office.²⁹ When he did so, probably in early May 1880, the response appears to have been an enthusiastic one. A Foreign Office aide made the following note regarding the west coast of Africa: "The entire coastal region from Cape Negro to Walvis Bay has apparently not passed under the control of any foreign power so far . . . It would seem desirable that a German ship conduct investigations and observations on the spot. In particular, we should make a point of gaining the Great Fish Bay [north of the Kunene River in southern Angola-H. D.], which is extremely useful, the same applying to Port Alexander."³⁰

Bismarck, however, disheartened by the Reichstag's rejection of the Samoa Bill, which had been the first step towards an official colonial policy, remained sceptical. In a note intended for his secretary, Heinrich von Kusserow, we find this laconic statement: "The Imperial Chancellor does not put much faith in Herr Fabri and his projects . . . He shows no inclination whatever to give serious consideration to Fabri's proposals and plans."³¹

Nevertheless, Fabri continued to pursue his plans, and on 3 June 1880 he sent the Foreign Office a comprehensive report³² on the situation in South West Africa, supplementing it with "Confidential Notes"³³ the following day. In these documents Fabri set out his minimum programme comprising the following points: (1) Energetic diplomatic intervention in London to protect the threatened interests of the German missionaries; (2) Despatch of a German warship to Walvis Bay; (3) Establishment of a fully-fledged consulate in Cape Town.

In the meantime, Sir Bartle Frere, the British High Commissioner in the Cape Colony, had deliberately provoked a war with the Zulus in South Africa. His defeat at Isandhlwana sealed the fate of the British Prime Minister Lord Beacons-

field (Disraeli). The latter's electoral defeat in 1880 meant the end of an era of boundless expansionism. Gladstone, who succeeded him, hurriedly recalled Sir Bartle Frere from South Africa.

These developments were not without repercussions in South West Africa. The German missionaries there had already succeeded in making the British feel very unhappy with their "protective" function by persistently bombarding the British resident in South West Africa, as well as the Cape Town authorities, with petitions and complaints. Their bewilderment was such that in order to forestall any claims by the missionaries they decided to pay them back the taxes they had collected in 1878-79. When in late August 1880 the Nama and the Herero resumed their struggle for supremacy, British "protection" collapsed definitively, with the British officials fleeing to Walvis Bay. Eight years later events took a similar course, but then it was the German "Protectorate" that broke down. According to Heinrich Vedder³⁴ Chief Maharero gave the following comment on the end of British "protection": "We saw it fluttering here, the British flag—it was fluttering to and fro; we clutched it and were blown to and fro with it." The missionaries had achieved their object, and C. G. Büttner noted with satisfaction: "The path was clear again in South West Africa."³⁵

The importance which Bismarck attached to the changed situation can be seen from an instruction given by his State Secretary, Count Friedrich Wilhelm Limburg-Stirum, which said that all written material concerning colonial affairs, and notably "the affairs of the Rhenish Missionary Society in Africa (Hereroland)" should henceforth be submitted to Department IA of the German Foreign Office for countersigning.³⁶

It was now completely out of the question to invite Britain to "clearly define her relationship [towards South West Africa-H. D.] in a manner consistent with the requirements of international law and the needs of the territory's [European-H. D.] inhabitants," as Fabri had demanded only a few months previously.³⁷ The German authorities limited themselves to expressing the desire that England "also apply to the German missionaries and traders the measures she had taken after the outbreak of war in Hereroland to protect the life and property of British subjects."³⁸ The reply they had hoped for came almost instantaneously: "Her Majesty's Government is not responsible for events occurring outside British territory, which only comprises Walvis Bay and a very small piece of land surrounding it."³⁹ Bismarck had thus received written confirmation that, apart from Walvis Bay, Britain had no jurisdiction over South West Africa.

In late 1881 the Imperial Home Office in Berlin agreed to finance a journey by the engineer Dr. C. Hoepfner "to prospect for ore deposits in South West Africa".⁴⁰ Fabri, for his part, eagerly pressed on with his plans for South West Africa through the medium of the Westdeutscher Verein für Kolonisation und Export (West German Association for Colonization and Export) which he had founded.⁴¹ But things did not really get under way until late 1882 and 1883 when a merchant from Bremen, Adolf Lüderitz,⁴² acquired Angra Pequena. Bismarck and his

secretary Heinrich von Kusserow,⁴³ who as son-in-law of the banker Adolf von Hanseemann represented the interests of the Disconto-Gesellschaft at the Foreign Office, immediately recognized the opportunity they were thus offered and seized it with both hands. Through Bismarck's famous telegram of 24 April 1884 Angra Pequena was placed under German "protection". The German Reich thereby officially joined the ranks of the colonial powers.

Bismarck, seeking to avoid the cost of acquiring and administering colonial possessions,⁴⁴ embarked on a colonial policy that constituted an anachronism in the era of transition from the capitalism of free competition to imperialism. He proposed to extend the "protection" of the German Reich over land "acquisitions" of German capitalists in territories claimed by no other European colonial power, reversing the "Trade follows the flag" doctrine. The "royal merchants", as Bismarck called these capitalists in a somewhat antiquated fashion, were to receive letters-patent modelled on the British royal charters that would entitle them to administer "their" colonies independently. Bismarck's colonial policy ended in failure in a matter of years. Some of the interested parties did not even request a "charter" (as in the case of the Cameroons, Togo and South West Africa) while in other instances the Reich had to revoke "charters" it had granted already (as in the case of East Africa and New Guinea).

Lüderitz and his "Purchases"

Adolf Lüderitz deserves attention for two reasons. For one thing, it is interesting to examine what attracted him to South West Africa and, for another, it is necessary to undertake a critical analysis of the fraudulent treaties by which he acquired African territory.

All bourgeois literature, right up to Schüssler,⁴⁵ maintains that Lüderitz's intention was to establish a settlement in South West Africa. But since, as a rule, capitalists do not throw their money down the drain, it would seem that Lüderitz had other things in mind than land for middle-class colonizers to settle on. The picture becomes clearer when one recalls the discovery of diamond fields in West Griqualand in 1870.⁴⁶ Similar finds in the geologically related and adjacent territory of South West Africa were a distinct possibility. Fabri had previously pointed out quite unmistakably⁴⁷ that South West Africa had potential only as a "mining colony". So what Lüderitz hoped to find was mineral wealth, above all diamonds, gold and silver. But to disguise his real intentions he always used rather vague terms, referring merely to mineral deposits. At one stage he wrote: "I should be pleased if it turned out that the entire soil [of the territory he had acquired in South West Africa-H. D.] is a colossal mineral deposit which, once it is mined, will leave the whole area one gaping hole."⁴⁸ That Lüderitz was not so much concerned with the extraction of metals—he specifically mentioned copper—is a fact that was first recognized 50 years ago by the bourgeois economist Herbert

Jäckel who observed: "Even in those early days one must have begun to dream of Angra Pequena as a land of gold and diamonds, probably because the Transvaal was so close at hand. How else could one explain the costly expeditions mounted by the Lüderitz company? That they were not on the look-out for rich copper deposits is only too apparent as copper prices were then very low and similar efforts made previously under more favourable circumstances had been thwarted by the prohibitive cost of transport. We tend to assume, therefore, that the South West African venture was primarily speculation in gold and diamonds."⁴⁹

The first purchase agreement which Lüderitz's agents concluded, on 1 May 1883 with Josef Frederiks, chief of the Bethanie people, concerned Angra Pequena and the adjacent area within a radius of five miles. In making Angra Pequena, which was Nama territory, the starting-point of his land acquisitions, Lüderitz automatically antagonized the Herero.⁵⁰ This fact subsequently led to the failure of his plans to gain a foothold in Hereroland as well. It should also be mentioned that, where Lüderitz relied on the Nama, there existed a rival group of Germans who looked to the Herero for support. However, the Lilienthal group, which owed its existence to Fabri and therefore enjoyed the full backing of the Rhenish Missionary Society, saw its plans founder.⁵¹

Lüderitz's agreement of 1 May 1883 was soon followed up by another, concluded on 25 August 1883, whereby Chief Josef Frederiks sold the coastal strip from the Orange River to a point 26° south, and stretching inland for 20 miles. These two contracts, which provide the basis for Bismarck's declaration of protection on 24 April 1884, are remarkable in several ways. A Rhenish missionary by the name of Bam helped to arrange both of them.⁵² The price was £100 plus 200 rifles, and £500 plus 60 English rifles, respectively. The £600 was in fact paid for in goods,⁵³ the supplier being free to ascribe to his articles the value of £600. Resuming the arms trade begun by the Missions-Handels-AG, Lüderitz now began to deliver weapons on a large scale. It is one of history's ironies that in order to penetrate South West Africa the German colonizers offered arms to the Africans. Once they had occupied the territory, they tried for 20 years to disarm the Africans again, but to no avail. So the English were then blamed for the fact that the Nama and the Herero were relatively well-equipped with arms.⁵⁴

The second agreement of August 1883 is a striking example of how Lüderitz cheated the Africans. The contract said that the Bethanie people had sold the above-mentioned coastal strip—"20 geographical miles wide". It is an established fact, however, that the Africans were unfamiliar with the term "geographical" or "German" mile (the equivalent of 7.4 kilometres). They assumed that what was meant was the English mile (equivalent to 1.5 kilometres)⁵⁵, a fact exploited by Lüderitz and his agent, Vogelsang, for their fraudulent manoeuvre. Chief Josef Frederiks later gave the following account of what had happened, the Rhenish missionary Bam indicating his willingness to affirm this on oath: "On concluding the second contract of purchase, Herr Vogelsang expressly declared that he was interested only in a sandy stretch of land which was of no use to them and which

Lüderitz wanted to explore with a view to discovering minerals. When they later found to their horror that under the terms of the contract they had sold virtually all their land, they made representations about this matter to Lüderitz during his first visit to Bethanie, and this gentleman, too, using two maps and a pair of compasses, defined the boundaries in such a way that they did not include the pasture land of Aus."⁵⁶ That Lüderitz was fully aware of deceiving the chief of the Bethanie people emerges from his letter to Vogelsang of 26 March 1884 in which he wrote: "Let Josef Frederiks believe for the time being that the reference is to 20 English miles."⁵⁷ The Rhenish missionary Bam played a particularly reprehensible role in that he failed to explain to the Africans what was meant by geographical miles.⁵⁸ Fairer in his dealings with the Bethanie people was Gustav Nachtigal, who concluded a "treaty of protection" with them on behalf of the German Reich in October 1884. In response to the Bethanie people's complaints about Lüderitz's fraud, Nachtigal deleted the word "geographical" in the "treaty of protection", simply speaking of miles, i. e. English miles.⁵⁹ But since Nachtigal died on his way home to Germany, his own reports and the complaints lodged by the Bethanie people disappeared into the archives of the German Foreign Office. Although the Bethanie people made several more attempts to direct the attention of the German authorities to the fraud to which they had been subjected, it was to no avail.⁶⁰

After Lüderitz's acquisitions of 1883 had been placed under the "protection" of the German Reich in April 1884, he was invited by the German Foreign Office to acquire the entire coastal region from a latitude of 26° south to the border of Angola.⁶¹ The apparent aim was to give some boost to Bismarck's reversal of the "trade follows the flag" doctrine. When Lüderitz failed to produce the expected results quickly enough, the Foreign Office in Berlin's Wilhelmstrasse ordered the German flag to be hoisted by warships all along the coastline from 26° south right up to the Angolan border before purchase agreements had been concluded. The Colonial Office in Berlin had thus itself shown up the absurdity of Bismarck's colonial policy.

Dr. Hoepfner had been instructed by Lüderitz to acquire the coastal area north of 26° south from Kamaherero, the Supreme Chief of the Herero. But before negotiations with the Herero came about, Lüderitz's agents found a more willing "seller" in the person of the Topnaar kaptein Piet Haibib who sold the coastal strip between 26° and 22° (also stretching inland for 20 geographical miles) at a price of £20. This agreement was directed against the Herero who claimed the Topnaar territory as their own. So it was no mere accident that Hoepfner's negotiations with Kamaherero came to nothing. As a result, Hoepfner tried a different tack. He entered into a treaty with the Rehoboth tribe, who inhabited the area south of the Herero territory, in order to cut the latter off from the British Cape Colony.⁶²

It was not until June or July 1885 that Lüderitz managed to secure possession of the northern coastal strip between 22° and Cape Frio where the German flag

had been waving since August 1884. Although Lüderitz was well aware that this area, too, was claimed by the Herero, he purchased it from the Zwartboois and Topnaars. Theodor Leutwein, who was later to become Governor, described the treaty concluded with Cornelius Zwartbooi and signed by the Topnaar kaptein Jan Uixamab in July in these words: "Of all the dubious land acquisition treaties negotiated by Lüderitz, the one concerning the coastal area between Swakop and Omaruru is the most dubious."⁶³ In order to persuade Zwartbooi to sign such a treaty, Lüderitz's agents resorted to a new stratagem, promising they would gain Okombahe and Waterberg for him, which were areas lying deep in Herero territory.⁶⁴ Needless to say, these were promises they were neither willing nor able to make good.

Ultimately, Lüderitz also succeeded in acquiring the hinterland of Walvis Bay by concluding an agreement with the Afrikaaner kaptein Jan Jonker. What made this treaty remarkable was the fact that due to tribal strife the Afrikaaners had dwindled to a mere 14 men capable of bearing arms and that they were no longer in control of the area sold when the treaty was signed.⁶⁵ This, however, did not seem to disturb Lüderitz in any way.

All told, Adolf Lüderitz managed to acquire a 20 mile deep coastal strip from the Orange river to Cape Frio (omitting only for Walvis Bay), as well as the hinterland of Walvis Bay, between 1883 and 1885, the aggregate price being £1,070 and 260 rifles. Leaving aside the hinterland, the area purchased was a sandy waste without any economic value. (That diamonds were discovered there 25 years later is another story.) The sole purpose of Lüderitz's land acquisition was to forestall similar efforts by other European colonial powers.

Lüderitz was unsuccessful, however, in his attempts to conclude purchase agreements with the Herero, the Ovambo and the more important of the Nama tribes notably the Witboois, the Bondelswarts, the Veldschoendragers, the Franzmanns and the Khauas.

On the other hand, Lüderitz's ambitions were not confined to South West Africa. Although he was a merchant by vocation, he no longer fitted the traditional pattern of the German merchant building trading stations in Africa with purely mercantile considerations in mind. Rather, Lüderitz epitomized a new, imperialist type of merchant bent on founding a large German colonial empire in the interests of German imperialism, which was then in its initial stages.⁶⁶ Consequently, he considered South West Africa merely the springboard for a larger and, preferably, territorially contiguous German colonial empire. Lüderitz's intentions were as follows: First of all, he was out to establish a South African condominium jointly administered by Germans and Boers.⁶⁷ His purchase of Santa Lucia Bay on the east coast of South Africa served this purpose. As it was, he overlooked the fact that the Boers were none too keen on being swallowed by either British or German imperialists⁶⁸ and that Bismarck did not want to antagonize the English and the Boers at the same time if this could be avoided. Hence there was no chance of Lüderitz realizing his plan of a South Africa under German-Boer rule. Instead,

Bismarck used Santa Lucia Bay as a "bargaining chip" for an Anglo-German compromise, leading Wilhelm Schüssler to comment: "Lüderitz was defeated by Rhodes."⁶⁹

Secondly, Lüderitz intended to found a German colonial empire in Central Africa. This project, which it seems was first suggested by Kusserow or even Bismarck himself, has so far received no mention anywhere in bourgeois publications. It should be noted, however, that at the very outset of German colonial history there already existed the plans that were later to acquire such disgraceful notoriety under the motto "Central Africa". Kusserow's memorandum of 8 April 1884,⁷⁰ which was decisive in prompting Bismarck to move on the colonial question, said on this score: "The aim is a secure route to the Upper Congo and Zambezi." To this Bismarck added the question: "From Namaland to the Congo?", which shows that Kusserow – in other words, the Disconto-Gesellschaft – had suggested this idea to the German Chancellor. Four weeks later Bismarck asked the German explorer Gerhard Rohlfs, one of the co-founders of the International Association in Brussels, to examine whether the King of the Belgians might be persuaded to sell the Congo. In July 1884 C. G. Büttner, the former Rhenish missionary, wrote in the *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung*: "The significance of the newly acquired territory [South West Africa – H. D.] will only become fully manifest if one does not take a narrow look at the situation, but looks upon it as a way of gaining access to Africa's interior."⁷¹

The So-called Protection Treaties

Lüderitz was rapidly won over to these plans. In a message he sent to Bismarck on 1 May 1884 he proposed that Southern Angola be wrested from the Portuguese.⁷² Repeatedly, he asked the civil servants in the Wilhelmstrasse not to publish maps showing clearly defined borders of the territory he had obtained because this might prejudice any future acquisitions.⁷³ The fact remained that the success of his plans for Central Africa depended completely on the conclusion of a treaty with the Herero which, it will be recalled, did not come about. Lüderitz's aide Sigmund Israel, who had taken part in the decisive expedition, gave the following account of what happened: "Our aim was to secure the cession of Damaraland or, at least, of a portion of territory large enough to open up a route to Central Africa. Starting out from Walvis Bay, we moved in a north-easterly direction to Otjimbingwe and Okahandja and entered into negotiations with the powerful Chief Kamaherero. Our expectations, full of fantastic visions, were completely disappointed. Our efforts to conclude a treaty with the Chief were a fiasco. Kamaherero was deaf to all our entreaties. He would not hear of such a thing as German protection, refusing to sell even an iota of territory. He was not even prepared to concede mining rights to Herr Lüderitz . . . In a way, Kamaherero's stubbornness dealt a death blow to our hopes of success. The Herero were the

unchallenged masters of the country and the Chief's opposition to our further advance put an end to our plan of penetrating as far as Central Africa."⁷⁴ Thus, the first attempt to advance from South West Africa to Central Africa had ended in failure.

Nevertheless, "treaties of protection" were concluded in 1884 and 1885 with the following tribes: the Bethanie people,⁷⁵ the Topnaars under Piet Haibib, the Berseba tribe,⁷⁶ the so-called Red Nation, the Rehoboth tribe and the Herero. They were designed as a kind of supplement to Lüderitz's contracts of purchase, as a belated legalization of the German penetration of South West Africa. Most of the treaties were negotiated by the former Rhenish missionary C. G. Büttner. Even before, during Lüderitz's purchase, the missionaries had played a crucial role. Now the Africans were faced with a former Rhenish missionary acting on behalf of the German Kaiser to conclude "treaties of protection". The Rhenish missionaries had thereby openly revealed themselves before the Africans as representatives of the interests of the German colonialists.⁷⁷ How Büttner perceived his role emerges with welcome clarity from a letter he addressed to Kusserow on 20 February 1885: "There is not much indication that the chiefs with whom treaties are to be concluded are impatient to enter into agreements with the German Reich. . . . Therefore, I beg you to issue instructions as to what promises and representations are to be made to bring pressure to bear on the chiefs."⁷⁸

In an almanac published at the time the so-called treaties of protection were characterized in the following words: "The German protection treaties were concluded at a time when the need for speedy action was paramount, when it seemed that the first essential was to secure certain areas for future colonial purposes. All this was to be accomplished at minimum cost, and the protection treaties were negotiated with this objective in mind."⁷⁹

The "protection treaties" constituted the minimum colonial programme of the German Government. The very fact of their conclusion was more important than their substance. In no case was there any cession of land involved. The content of the agreements reached in 1884 and 1885 may be summed up as follows: The Chief, as one party to the treaty, undertook not to enter into any treaties with other nations and not to cede his territory or portions thereof to any other nation or members thereof without the approval of the German Government. He also pledged to protect the life and property of German nationals and to allow them to carry on trade without let or hindrance on his territory, the German authorities retaining jurisdiction over all Europeans. In return, the German Government promised to extend "protection" to the chief and his tribe, while recognizing and supporting the Chief's jurisdiction over his own people. Europeans were to respect the customs and traditions of the Africans and to abstain from any act that would be an infraction of laws and regulations in force in their own country.

The conclusion of a "protection treaty" with the Herero was a great success for the German colonialists. It marked a breach in the front of their principal opponents, the Witboois and the Herero. These two population groups differed on a

decisive point in their attitude to colonial rule: while the Witboois, as a matter of principle, rejected any form of dependence on European colonial powers, the Herero were merely opposed to *German* colonial rule.⁸⁰ When it became clear, however, that the Herero could not count on British protection, they yielded to German pressure.

The following episode will furnish an example of how a South West African tribe, the Bondelswarts, refused to accept a so-called protection treaty in spite of German pressure. The German Commissioner C. G. Büttner, in a despatch to Bismarck on 28 June 1885, gave this account of what happened: "On the morning of 27th June I was summoned to attend a Council meeting to be held in the local school building. Assembled there were the kaptein and about 15 Nama of high rank. I told him about the purpose of my visit, produced my letter of attorney and, for his information, read out the treaty signed with the Bethanie people. Asked whether he had understood what my intentions were, he answered: 'Yes'. Asked what his reply was, he said that he was not interested in the matter at all. When I invited him to set out the reasons for his negative reply, he refused to do so. I then urged him to tell me at least what he disliked about the draft I had read out to him, but invariably the answer was a persistent 'No'. He added that he did not owe me an explanation as he was not being interrogated. I pointed out to him that England herself had defined the boundaries of her protectorate and that his own territory lay outside it. Willem Christian replied that he was unaware of this fact and that, on the contrary, he had been summoned to the Cape only recently. For the rest, the Nama were not British subjects and even if I was proved right they would not enter into a treaty with the German Reich. In response to my question as to what I should tell His Majesty, the Kaiser, about the negotiations, he said that this was my business and that his answer remained 'No'. At the end of that half hour Willem Christian put on his hat, bade me good-bye and walked away."⁸¹

But Büttner was not willing to acknowledge defeat so rapidly. In the days that followed he tried to impress on the Chief "the gravity of the situation", and it seems that he even threatened to go to war. This can be gathered from the report Büttner sent to Bismarck on 24 July 1885, which reads in part: "On the morning of 30th June, a member of the council of elders came to see me to seek further clarification of the statement I had made to the Chief. Specifically, he wished to know whether war with Germany was imminent or not. My answer was that, as I knew, no German had lodged any complaint about the Bondelswarts with our Government, so there was no apparent reason for immediate recourse to force. But, I added, it might well become unavoidable if a complaint was lodged, no treaty having come into existence. I said that in view of Willem Christian's flat refusal it was impossible for myself to renew the negotiations, so it would now be up to them to resume the talks."⁸²

This massive pressure notwithstanding, the Chief of the Bondelswarts remained adamant, communicating his definitive negative reply to Büttner in a brief letter

which said: "As the Supreme Head of my country and my people I consulted my councillors and my people on the proposed draft treaty following your departure. It emerged that myself and my people deem it impossible to conclude a treaty with Your Excellency as the representative of His Majesty the German Emperor."⁸³

The bulk of the Nama tribes such as the Witboois, the Bondelswarts, the Veldschoendragers, the Franzmanns and the Khauas refused categorically to sign a treaty with the German Reich. This was to remain so until 1890 or 1894. In politico-legal terms, South West Africa presented the following picture in 1884-85. It consisted of: (1) the territory acquired by Lüderitz; (2) other territory placed under the "protection" of the German Reich; and (3) the territory of the chiefs who had declined to enter into so-called treaties of protection. This territory was looked upon as a German sphere of interest by the German authorities.

The Sale of Lüderitz's "Possessions"

As Lüderitz's hopes of quickly discovering gold and diamonds were not realized, his financial situation deteriorated rapidly.⁸⁴ His ambitions were greater than his financial resources and so, inevitably, his acquisitions passed in 1885 into the hands of monopoly capital, then in its infancy, which was the only force to derive lasting profit from colonial possessions. As early as the autumn of 1884, Adolph von Hanseemann, head of the Disconto-Gesellschaft, used the good offices of his brother-in-law Heinrich von Kusserow to sound out Lüderitz on the question of selling his acquisitions to that company. A graphic account of his negotiations with Hanseemann was given by Lüderitz himself: "Since Herr von Kusserow first introduced me to Privy Councillor Hanseemann (of the Disconto-Gesellschaft), I have seen the latter on frequent occasions. He seems to believe he can get my cessions of land for a song, but this is completely out of the question. When he asked me about the matter, I told him that I would demand 500,000 Marks in cash to cover my costs, risk, etc. plus 5 per cent of the profits from the businesses the company would set up in my territory. I said the company would be free to extract any ore and minerals it would discover in my territory from 26° south to the Orange River while I would reserve only trading and fishing rights. Privy Councillor Hanseemann replied that I should cede the territory complete with all premises (buildings etc.) so that it would become the property of the company, but this proposal is unacceptable."⁸⁵

Lüderitz stood firm at that time because he was not yet completely at the end of his financial resources. At the very most, he was prepared to leave the exploitation of the mineral wealth in the hands of a company to be established, but he was not ready to sell "his territory". Hanseemann's attitude, however, was one of "take it or leave it". While Lüderitz refused to accept his terms, Hanseemann was biding his time. He could afford to play a waiting game as Kusserow had informed him in detail of Lüderitz's pecuniary difficulties.

Lüderitz's financial situation went from bad to worse in early 1885. Rumour even had it that he was planning to sell his South West African possessions to prospective buyers in England. At that stage Bismarck intervened,⁸⁶ a move that led to some intriguing collusion between the Imperial Chancellor and the world of high finance. The financiers waited until the Government invited them to take over Lüderitz's possessions. When they then responded positively, this "act of patriotism" earned them the "everlasting gratitude" of the State. At the same time, it allowed them to buy up Lüderitz's acquisitions at a lower price than he had originally demanded. The Bremen merchant found himself compelled to reduce his claim from 600,000 to 500,000 Marks (300,000 Marks in cash and 200,000 in the form of an interest in the company to be founded).

The founding of the German South West Africa Company (*Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft für Südwestafrika*), which proceeded to acquire Lüderitz's possessions, took place on 30 April 1885.⁸⁷ Members included some of the richest men in Germany such as Hansemann, Bleichröder, the Duke of Ujest and Count Henckel von Donnersmarck. Finance capital was particularly well represented, examples being – apart from Bleichröder and the *Disconto-Gesellschaft* – the *Deutsche Bank*, *Delbrück, Leo & Co.*, the *Dresdner Bank* and the *Bankhaus Sl. Oppenheim jun. & Co.* The capital stock of the German South West Africa Company, initially valued at 800,000 Marks, was soon raised to 1,200,000 Marks.

Taking a closer look at the company, one is struck by the glaring discrepancy between the financial capacity of its shareholders and the modest capital stock of the company. A comparison between the German South West Africa Company and the numerous land companies established in South West Africa in the 1890s reveals that it was by far the biggest such company (holding approximately 240,000 square kilometres of land), but had less capital than any other. Of its total capital stock, valued at 1,200,000 Marks, 722,000 Marks was in the form of contributions that had yet to be made, so that at the outset the real sum available was a mere 468,000 Marks.

To gloss over its financial weakness the German South West Africa Company stressed that it had been established primarily on "patriotic" grounds. When invited to meet their obligation to pay Imperial Stamp Duty, its directors sent a strongly worded complaint to the *Bundesrat*, the upper house of Parliament, which reads in part: "Our company is not a purchasing or trading company, rather it is a non-profit organization acting in the national interest. This can be seen from the motives to which it owes its establishment and which arise from its fulfilment of the patriotic duty to maintain a lasting and direct relationship between the Empire and the territories on Africa's southwestern coast that have been placed under the protection of the German Reich, motives fully appreciated by H. E. the Prince Bismarck, our distinguished patron. . . . For these reasons and with due regard for the non-profit-making character of our society, which has no other interests than those of the Empire at heart, and which does not seek any advantages for itself and sees no way of making any tax sacrifices in addition to its patriotic

sacrifices, we beg the Bundesrat to declare the shares to be issued exempt from payment of Imperial Stamp Duty."⁸⁸ Of course, the Bundesrat could not allow this poignant plea to pass unheard.⁸⁹ It rapidly granted the request, with the result that the allegedly patriotic motives of the founders of the German South West Africa Company became a myth that has been carefully fostered by all bourgeois authors to this very day.⁹⁰ One might even accept the word "patriotic" if it is interpreted in the sense attributed to it by the explorer and adventurer Karl Peters, who can hardly be suspected of taking a jaundiced view of the matter: "A colony which yields a profit on the money invested is a laudable enterprise whereas a colony which turns out to be unprofitable is an unpatriotic venture."⁹¹

The Africans, of course, were unaware of all these developments in faraway Germany, knowing nothing of the transfer of Lüderitz's purchases into the hands of wealthy financiers. Since all decisions had been made on the political stage, no appreciable changes occurred for the people of South West Africa in 1884-85. Their internal struggle for supremacy was still commanding their undivided attention. That the situation had completely changed, the German colonialists having become their chief enemy in 1884, was a fact not yet recognized by South West Africans because the German presence in 1885 was still limited to a mere *three* imperial officials: the Commissioner Dr. Goeting,⁹² the "Chancellor" Nels and the police chief Goldammer. It can be easily imagined that the Africans were not particularly impressed by the presence of a bare handful of civil servants.⁹³

The Borders of South West Africa

The German Government was at pains in those years to settle South West Africa's borders in diplomatic talks with Britain and Portugal. By annexing Bechuanaland⁹⁴ Whitehall had already ruled out any substantial eastward expansion of South West Africa. Consequently, there was little debate about South West Africa's southern and eastern borders, even though it was not until the Anglo-German agreement of 1 July 1890 that they were fixed definitively.

The line of latitude through Cape Frio was regarded as the northern border of South West Africa. Rather abruptly, however, the German Government began to put pressure on the Portuguese, demanding that they recognize the Kunene River as the border. As emerges from instructions given by the Wilhelmstrasse to the German Minister in Lisbon on 8 March 1887, Germany wished to see this viewpoint prevail "without further examination of the legal technicalities involved" and without entering into a "theoretical debate with the Portuguese Government". If Portugal accepted this border, so the line of reasoning went, she would lose only territories of no value and in return gain an assured frontier. Lisbon might then "resume its old plan of establishing a link between Portuguese possessions in the western and eastern parts of Africa and gradually put it into effect." Portugal was rather upset by the German demand, but deemed it advisable to give

in to the German pressure. A protocol to that effect was signed on 30 December 1886.⁹⁵

Contemporary authors, far from being satisfied with this settlement, deplored the fact that the northern border had not been extended to Portuguese East Africa via Matabeleland and Mashonaland. The *Koloniales Jahrbuch* noted: "We have thus lost these two areas which might well be looked upon as the more distant hinterland of Damaraland, an attitude quite commonly held among colonial quaters in Germany. . . . It is now no longer possible to expand our South West African possession in what is surely the most natural and promising direction."⁹⁶

Towards the end of 1886, only South West Africa's northeastern border remained ill-defined, this being so because the British had demarcated Bechuanaland's border only as far as 22° south. In the following years, therefore, the German colonialists concentrated their territorial ambitions on South West Africa's northeastern border. They were intent on occupying the countries south of the Zambezi River, speculating that South West Africa's size would then attain 30,000 square miles or 1,550,000 square kilometres.⁹⁷ The Anglo-German agreement of 1890 put an end, at least for the time being, to all this speculation.⁹⁸

A Bleak Economic Situation: Disillusionment and Stagnation

But let us return to our starting-point, the transfer of Lüderitz's acquisitions into the hands of finance capital. The comparatively modest cash resources of the German South West Africa Company were dwindling rapidly because of the cost of expeditions which Lüderitz had initiated. Before long, in March 1886, the State Commissioner attached to the company said in a report to Bismarck: "The business outlook of the company is less than favourable. Minerals or ores that might be extracted have not yet been found nor have other sources of income been discovered. . . . Owing to this state of affairs, the Board of Directors was in a depressed mood. . . . It was characteristic of the climate prevailing at the meeting that the Chairman, the Duke of Ujest, declared that he would resign from the company and turn over his shareholding interest to the Imperial Government if the company continued to be denied the support of the Imperial Government."⁹⁹ The Chairman's apparent aim was to put pressure on Bismarck to look more favourably on the company and to save it from financial ruin with money from the public purse.

The Board's report on its first year of commercial operation (1885-86)¹⁰⁰ painted a gloomy picture of the company's situation. It said: "Our expeditions have had to be discontinued and our general agent in Africa has been recalled and dismissed. . . . Now we have no choice but to safeguard our assets in the southwestern part of Africa." As of 1 September 1886, the company's assets were put at approximately 280,000 Marks. The report ended on a melancholy note: "When our company was established, its members were fully aware that they could not

expect their capital to yield interest in the immediate future." However, it noted, "they were prepared to make contributions in line with their possibilities." The last sentence means nothing else but that the members of the German South West Africa Company who, it will be recalled, were among the richest men in Germany did not have the slightest intention of making capital available for the development of South West Africa over and above the contributions they had already made.

This first report of the company caused resentment at the German Foreign Office, a memorandum saying that "the gloomy account given of the situation tends to detract from the merit of the whole undertaking in South West Africa, now and in future."¹⁰¹ The company's Board were compelled to soften some of the statements which the Foreign Office had considered particularly pessimistic.

The Board's report about the first year of operation reflected the disappointment prevalent in the world of high finance about the failure to discover gold and diamonds in South West Africa. Throughout the next twenty years, the German South West Africa Company relied on the extensive studies of mining conditions conducted by the engineer Dr. Stapff (if one leaves aside the effects of the gold fever in 1887-88). Stapff pointed out that the country was doubtless rich in mineral wealth, but this would certainly "not be discovered by people setting out to find gold or diamonds". He said it would be wiser to desist from further expeditions and, instead, to look forward with serenity to the opening up of South West Africa. The treasures of its soil would come to light in due course.¹⁰²

So the "freewheeling days of colonization"¹⁰³ were followed by a period of disillusionment with colonial policy, which in the case of South West Africa lasted from about 1886 to 1892. The Africans there hardly took any notice of the "German Protectorate". The British referred to this state of affairs as a "shadow protectorate" which would have to disappear sooner or later.¹⁰⁴ In Germany, those interested in colonies were dissatisfied, criticizing the Government in very harsh terms. The *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* said that: "Up to now the German Protectorate over these territories has existed only in name. People are being told so many things about the might of the German Empire, but no one ever sees it applied. . . . Either the German Empire makes a move to maintain its prestige or it will have to abandon the territories it has gained. The current situation is one of which Germany must feel ashamed."¹⁰⁵

The Herero, who in 1885 had entered into a treaty because they hoped the Germans would afford them protection from the Nama, had realized in the intervening period that the Germans were neither willing nor able to grant them such protection. As a result, they became more and more indifferent to a treaty which so clearly favoured one side. As for the Witboois, the most important Nama tribe, they had refused right from the outset to conclude any agreement with the German Reich.

As usual, Hendrik Witbooi was waging war for supremacy in South West Africa without paying any attention to the Germans. When during one of his cam-

paigms against the Herero the horse of the Imperial Commissioner fell into his hands, Dr. Goering found himself obliged to make a request to Witbooi for the restitution of his mount. Again, on conquering Hoachanas, Witbooi's forces captured a German flag which the Chief then sent to Goering with an accompanying letter. Hendrik Witbooi was a man of remarkable self-confidence. On one occasion he was invited by "Chancellor" Nels, who described himself as Goering's "deputy", to see him at Walvis Bay. Witbooi's answer was: "I should have liked to come were it not for the fact that your position, Sir, is that of a deputy. However, a deputy is less powerful than someone fully authorized to act, so I have decided not to comply with your request."¹⁰⁶ The leader of a German mining expedition also reported that at the very beginning of their conversation Witbooi asked him what business the white man had to be there. When the Germans, trying to strike as conciliatory a note as possible, replied that they were merely looking for minerals and had no designs on his land, but had come as his friends, Witbooi snapped: "So really? . . . As friends you have come? . . . But this is my land, and I do not want to have anything to do with the white man."¹⁰⁷ Small wonder, then, that Goering, summing up the situation, wrote in a report to Bismarck: "The news we receive from Namaqualand about the anti-German mood there is not very encouraging."¹⁰⁸

Because of its strange "protectorate" over South West Africa the German Foreign Office was under pressure from various quarters to despatch troops and guns there. The geographer Pechuel-Loesche wrote: "It would be necessary to send some artillery down there, preferably light and easy to transport, but of a calibre large enough to create havoc among that band of robbers when they seek refuge amid heaps of rubble and debris. Once they have come under gunfire they will not return. Failing this, we shall lose all authority and Dr. Goering will have to quit the field as the English commissioners before him. . . . Down there in those sandy wastes matters do not take care of themselves as in the Cameroons, the risks being much greater. The natives must realize that they cannot have it their way. The Herero must be convinced that we mean business when we say we will protect them against that band of robbers."¹⁰⁹ Should the Herero dissociate themselves from us, our cause down there will be a lost one. It would take a military campaign to assert our authority, but the cost would be out of all proportion to the value of the territory."¹¹⁰

The missionaries, too, were greatly embittered by the way the situation was developing in South West Africa. Although having been instrumental in paving the way for the German penetration of the country, they now found themselves without any support from the German side, and were, instead, becoming increasingly isolated as they had revealed themselves to be agents of German colonialism in the eyes of the Africans.¹¹¹ When Hendrik Witbooi, a devout Christian, was about to slip away from the influence of the Rhenish Missionary Society, the latter took a drastic step to bring him back into their fold, dissolving their mission at Gibeon in 1887. As it turned out, this move was counter-productive. "The boycott had

the unexpected result that the Witbooi tribe now had an *independent* church. . . . The influence of foreign missionaries [on the Witboois - H. D.] had thus been removed."¹¹²

Gold is "Discovered"

A development in August 1887 abruptly made South West Africa the focus of public attention. Australian gold diggers reported finds of "gold" in the area controlled by the German South West Africa Company. If the word "gold" is used in inverted commas here, this is because it turned out a few years later that the discovery was nothing but a hoax. The gold diggers had salted the alleged site of discovery by shooting gold into the rock with their rifles.¹¹³ It is astonishing that none of those who mentioned this fraud should have asked the question: *Cui bono?* After serious consideration of the motives of all possible interested persons, the evidence suggests the Imperial Commissioner Dr. Goering to be the likely instigator. He, who was "governing" South West Africa virtually unnoticed, may well have wished to revive interest in this German colony. Above all, he wanted to galvanize into action the German South West Africa Company which had lapsed into a state of lethargy. Indeed, it was no one else but Goering who confirmed the presence of "gold" on the spot.¹¹⁴ His next move was to go to Germany to give a personal account of the situation. A recent publication on this matter says: "The immediate result of his oral report was that it bolstered confidence in the value of the Protectorate among German Government and business quarters."¹¹⁵ Goering was successful. The German South West Africa Company, which had suspended all activity one year before, now went through a period of hectic excitement. The Board of Directors sent a letter to the Supervisory Council describing the completely changed situation in South West Africa. The letter noted: "The discovery of goldfields in our South West African colonial possessions, of which Dr. Goering has informed us at length, means the inauguration of an extraordinary and decisive phase in the development of our company.

"The gold finds are important enough to warrant preliminary measures concerning their exploitation, but their extent is not yet fully known so that it is not possible, at the present moment, to foresee all the consequences that might arise from them and to take them definitively into account in setting up new establishments.

"Under these circumstances the tasks of the company are highly significant. In our estimation, they are of three kinds:

"1. It will be necessary to send an expedition led by a mining expert into our South West African territories. . . .

"2. Without recognition of the company's jurisdiction it is difficult to see how the country's mineral resources can be exploited. The German Empire, in its protective capacity, is not authorized to do so while the Company as a purely private

association is incapable of making use of the advantages that might accrue. Therefore, representations will have to be made to the Reich Chancellor to obtain an Imperial Charter for the German South West Africa Company. As for the burden devolving upon the company itself, we believe that the following will be adequate for the time being:

- (a) The economist Hermann . . . might be charged with all administrative business in the southern part of the country.
- (b) The Imperial Commissioner Dr. Goering might . . . become the company's general agent and conduct administrative business in the northern part of the territory.
- (c) An executive force of five Europeans (former German soldiers) and fifteen natives will be formed to be attached to the Imperial Commissioner. . . .
- (d) A full-scale administration for the entire country should, if necessary, be established by the end of 1888. . . .

"3. If substantial damage is to be avoided, there must be no delay in issuing legal regulations regarding the prospecting for, and exploitation of, gold and precious stones in the protected territories of South West Africa. As far as this is concerned, the company will have to request the Reich Chancellor to initiate legislation to this effect and to submit proposals giving due regard to the company's participation and legitimate requirements. The cost arising from these activities for the company in the calendar year 1888 is estimated as follows:

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Expedition | 80,000 Marks |
| Establishment and upkeep of executive force acc. to encl. calculations | 50,000 Marks |
| Total | 130,000 Marks |

There can be no doubt that, given the company's current assets of 270,000 Marks, such heavy outlay appears to be a disproportionate amount. However, we should like to point out that energetic action is required now and that, even if our expectations are realized only in part, the company will be able to count on a substantial inflow of revenue and on increased contributions to its capital stock. If, on the other hand, our hopes should be disappointed it would certainly not be worth the effort, considering our experience so far, to continue the fruitless work of the company for just a few further years by means of the money thus saved."¹⁸⁸

Let us examine now the fate of the Board's proposals to the company's Supervisory Council. The first point was the sending of a mining expedition to South West Africa. From among its midst, the German South West Africa Company formed the South West African Gold Syndicate which sent an expedition to South West Africa in March 1888. Some other mining companies were also formed with the result that, all told, four expeditions set out for South West Africa. At its request, the German South West Africa Company was granted, by Imperial Decree of 25 March 1888, concessions for all minerals eligible for extraction. It is interesting to note that the Decree was not limited to the territory of the German

South West Africa Company, but covered the entire area of the so-called Protectorate. In return for its obligation to supervise all mining activities in South West Africa, the company was empowered to levy duties and taxes. But to lend weight to its regulations it needed an "armed force". In line with a proposal made by the Imperial Commissioner, this "protective force" was to comprise six Germans and twenty Africans for a start. While it did not take very long to enlist the Germans, it proved rather difficult to recruit Africans.

To this extent, the proposals of the company's Board of Directors had been carried out. But on the crucial question of obtaining an Imperial Charter, the German South West Africa Company failed to make a move because of the cost involved. The Foreign Office was still wedded to Bismarck's view that the administration of colonies was not a state matter, but of the capitalists concerned. However, neither Lüderitz nor the German South West Africa Company had so far requested a charter for the territory as they were reluctant to assume the financial obligations this would entail. In early 1887 the company wrote to Bismarck: "As regards sovereign rights, we have not yet been able, because of our limited resources and the still undeveloped needs of the country, to establish a full-fledged State administration nor will this be possible in the foreseeable future."¹¹⁷ But when the first reports about the presumed discovery of gold reached Berlin, the German South West Africa Company, referring to the possibility of obtaining a charter, asked Bismarck "what size the State administration would have to be and what kind of officials would be deemed indispensable in the initial period."¹¹⁸

Following this, Bismarck ordered the Foreign Office to draw up a memorandum "regarding the conditions for granting an Imperial Charter to the German South West Africa Company."¹¹⁹

The basic idea of this lengthy document was this: "The financial benefits accruing to the company from the entitlement to levy taxes and duties and to exercise other rights of jurisdiction will be modest, given the economic situation in the Protectorate. It is, therefore, advisable to reduce the demands to be made on the company to a minimum." So the State was highly accommodating on this matter, and in late 1887 the German South West Africa Company announced "that we intend to apply for a charter for our possessions shortly."¹²⁰ In contrast, the minutes of the meeting held by the company's Supervisory Council on 26 January 1888 only contain this laconic statement: "The Board's position is that no application for an Imperial Charter should be made by the company for the time being."¹²¹ The question was never raised again.

The Collapse of the German "Protectorate"

The scramble for gold was brought to an abrupt end in late October 1888 with the collapse of the German "Protectorate" in Damaraland. The Herero who, it will be recalled, had signed a "protection treaty" with the German Empire in

1885 only because they hoped to obtain protection against their enemies, realized more and more that there could be no question of this in practice. In a private letter, the missionary M. Viehe admitted that the Herero "must have interpreted Germany's promises of protection as a pledge to protect them from their enemies (not from England or some other non-African power) and were convinced that they had surrendered the rights mentioned in the treaty to Germany in return for the benefit of this protection. Not only the Herero, but also the Europeans and, as I see it, the officials themselves interpreted 'protection' in this sense. The oral assurances given to this effect left no doubt as to that. At a meeting, Dr. Goering's deputy said he was fully aware that they [the Herero] were dissatisfied because they had seen so little of the protection promised, but, he added, they should not forget that Germany was far away."¹²²

The *Koloniales Jahrbuch* said quite openly in its 1889 edition that "in German eyes this 'protection' meant little more than the intention to keep other nations away from that country." Summing up the whole situation, it noted: "There was no reason whatsoever why the South West Africans should either love or fear the Reich. With the passage of time, they grew quite indifferent to it and, as things stand today, they care as little about the German treaties of protection as the Imperial Government itself."¹²³

German failure to grant protection as promised was not the only grievance of the Herero. The gold hoax of 1888 gave rise to further complaints. The growing numbers of Germans flocking to South West Africa soon provoked feelings of anger and contempt among the Africans. It started with drinking bouts and invectives against the Africans and ended with the Germans taking liberties with the Herero women.¹²⁴ Although the Germans had undertaken in Article 3 of the "treaty of protection" to respect the customs and habits of the Herero, they were persistently violating this provision. Amongst other things, they built their homes in the immediate vicinity of traditional burial places of the Herero, which deeply offended the feelings of the Africans. And a missionary, F. Bernsmann, went as far as to declare in response to a Herero's remark that "Maherero is just as great as the German Emperor, at least in his own country" that the Germans were only too well aware that Maharero had once been the slave of Jonker Afrikander. These words caused quite a stir among the Herero because they had grounds to suspect the Germans might seek to reduce Maharero to his former status.¹²⁵

As a result, much resentment had built up among the Herero during 1888. The situation had reached flashpoint level, and it was the British who provided the spark. It is one of history's ironies that the originator of the gold hoax—quite contrary to his intentions—rekindled Britain's and the Cape Colony's interest in a South West Africa whose alleged goldfields now made it very attractive to capitalist eyes. An English adventurer by the name of Robert Lewis invited Maharero to bring into effect treaties and rights dating from before the signing of the "protection treaty" with the German Reich and to annul all arrangements with Germany. This proposal suited Maharero well as he was impatient to put

an end to the German interlude which was becoming somewhat of a nuisance. Maharero, however, knew only too well that if he accepted the English proposal the Herero would achieve little more than to have British domination substituted for German rule. All bourgeois German literature on this subject describes the annulment of German "protection" by the Herero in 1888, if it is mentioned at all, as a consequence of British machinations and intrigues. This oversimplification, however, completely misses the point, since it is very likely that even without the British overtures the Herero would have turned their backs on the Germans, albeit possibly somewhat later. The British intervention was merely the event that brought matters to a head.

Although officials of the German South West Africa Company had warned the German Imperial Commissioner about the rising tide of discontent among the Herero, he paid no attention to these warnings. In his naïveté and complacency he believed that as the representative of His Majesty the German Kaiser he could easily subdue the rebellious Herero. As a result, he was completely overwhelmed by the march of events, for which he was later harshly criticized by the German Foreign Office¹²⁶ and the German South West Africa Company.¹²⁷

A meeting presided over by Maharero was held at Okahandja on 30 October 1888. It was attended by about 100 Herero as well as five Germans¹²⁸ and eight Britons with Robert Lewis as their spokesman. The proceedings turned into a scathing indictment of German policy, Goering being subjected to a veritable barrage of questions and grievances from the Herero. The issue of protection was the central theme that recurred again and again. One Herero remarked: "Where is your Protectorate? We thought you would come to our aid in the event of an attack on us. What kind of protectorate is yours? What we want is protection."¹²⁹ The excitement grew. The culminating point came when the treaties of Robert Lewis were read out and acknowledged as valid by the Herero. Goering reported about this episode: "Chief Aponda shouted at the top of his voice: 'Let's stop talking. Lewis is our *amubona* (sovereign)'."¹³⁰

With Lewis's treaties recognized by the Herero, the bottom had been knocked out of the German "Protectorate". Although there was no personal danger to the Germans, Goering and the agents of the German South West Africa Company preferred to leave Hereroland for Walvis Bay, i.e. British territory, eight days later. This marked the end, at least for the moment, of the German "Protectorate" over Hereroland. Given the situation in German East Africa at the time, there can be no doubt that German colonialism had reached its nadir in 1888.

Apart from the Imperial civil servants and the German South West Africa Company, it was the Rhenish Missionary Society that was particularly affected by the developments of 30 October 1888. At the meeting the missionaries had been severely scolded and Maharero had temporarily barred them from any religious activity. This was the end result of their policy of assisting the German imperialists to penetrate South West Africa. Deeply shaken by the course of events, the missionary Viche pondered: "Can this really be the end of the Herero

Mission? I would gladly shake the dust off my feet if I could consider myself pure and innocent, if there had not been that unfortunate mingling of colonial policy and missionary work."¹³¹ A few days later he observed: "Our Mission has been affected to an alarming extent, indeed to the point where its very existence is in jeopardy. I must concede that we are not free from blame. But the missionaries have sinned only in so far as they put too much faith in the government of the Fatherland and lent excessive credence to the assurances given by the civil servants. Relying on these assurances they unreservedly supported the aspirations of the civil servants whom they considered the ultimate authority in the land and to whom they looked for protection. However, it became more and more apparent that there was no force behind their words."¹³²

Such expressions of self-criticism were soon pushed into the background by those who wanted to see the Rhenish Missionary Society's position among the Herero restored by force (as a sign of gratitude to the Fatherland so to speak). The missionary W. Eich wrote: "The material losses the abandonment of missionary work would entail are immense. Hence the imperative need for vigorous action by the Government, bloodshed being scarcely avoidable."¹³³ But no one among the missionaries was clamouring more openly for war than H. Brincker. A letter he sent to Bismarck with the request not to mention his name and position reads in part: "Most Gracious Prince, I would feel very sorry if Germany were to give up a territory so potentially rich in gold to a band of adventurers [Bismarck noted in the margin: 'Unfortunately, we are lacking these. Without enterprise and capital the outlook is bleak. The Empire cannot assume the role of an entrepreneur'] so that the Cape Government may annex it soon. Morally speaking, Damaraland is part of the German Fatherland because it is our Rhenish Mission alone that has made great sacrifices for it, witness the graves of its fallen missionaries there. It is true, of course, that Damaraland cannot be retained through treaties concluded with chiefs. A European power must be established here to safeguard the exploitation of its riches [Here Bismarck noted: 'This is not the affair of the Empire']. What is needed is a standing militia composed of at least 400 men plus two batteries so that any manifestation of arrogance and violation of interests can be punished." The letter concluded: "Chancellor, the writer of this letter and my colleagues have uttered this cry of distress because we understand that Germany intends to abandon Damaraland, and Lewis is already busy making arrangements for this eventuality. We hope to God that the most recent worrying news is not confirmed and that Your Highness and the Reichstag will soon be able to allay our fears with better news or, preferably, positive action of the kind suggested above."¹³⁴

The first report about the "catastrophe"¹³⁵ in Hereroland reached Berlin on 13 December 1888. The Foreign Office, which was conducting an exchange of views with the German South West Africa Society about developments in the territory, asked the company "to maintain secrecy for the time being". It was only after reports in the English press that German papers began to inform their

readers—about 9 January 1889—of the breakdown of the German “Protectorate” in Damaraland.

An initial memorandum prepared by the Foreign Office for Bismarck said in a tone of resignation: “There can be no question of applying force against the Herero whose territory is several days’ journey away from the coast.”¹³⁶ During the following days, therefore, the Wilhelmstrasse focussed its interest on Robert Lewis: “If we were in control of Hereroland, we could expel him from the Protectorate.”¹³⁷ Instructions from Bismarck provided the clue to the Foreign Office’s further handling of the matter. The Chancellor noted: “We are finding ourselves up against England rather than Lewis or the Herero.”¹³⁸ This was typical of Bismarck whose entire thinking was dominated by diplomatic considerations. He looked upon the Africans, for whom he had nothing but contempt, as a negligible quantity.¹³⁹ They would have to accept the arrangement he was out to reach with England.

Shortly afterwards, Bismarck received a report from his Consul-General in Cape Town which seemed to confirm his view of developments in South West Africa. The Consul-General reported that one Mr. Kingon, a business associate of Robert Lewis, had called on him, offering him £100,000 for South West Africa. “Mr. Kingon’s move seems to indicate that Lewis and his backers despair of getting support from the British and Cape governments, which leads them to seek a direct understanding. At the same time, it somewhat restores my belief that it is really worth the effort to keep Damaraland permanently. The German mining officials who came here were initially rather reserved, but later they admitted during confidential talks—to my great disappointment—that not a single gold mine suitable for extraction had been discovered anywhere in the German Protectorate. They conceded the possibility of success at some later stage, yet without much confidence in the future of the country and the German undertakings there.”¹⁴⁰ The Consul-General did not take up Mr. Kingon’s offer.

Owing to the exodus of Germans ordered by Goering, the situation in Hereroland had become even more difficult for the German Government. Was the German withdrawal attributable to cowardice on the part of Goering or was it a cunning manoeuvre by him to force the German Government either to abandon South West Africa or to conquer it by force? In his first detailed report to Bismarck about the events in Damaraland, Goering recommended military intervention to restore German domination. With this in mind, he demanded an expeditionary corps of 400 to 500 men plus five or six pieces of light artillery.¹⁴¹ Bismarck rejected this proposal as being incompatible with his colonial policy.¹⁴² Since Goering had anticipated this answer, he immediately came up with an alternative proposal to the effect that the German South West Africa Company should itself set up a colonial force at least 600 strong and despatch it to South West Africa. However the company, which put most of the blame for the predicament on Goering,¹⁴³ refused to undertake any military intervention on the basis of its own resources. In a lengthy report addressed to Bismarck it said, *inter alia*: “Our company lacks

the means of bringing about a change in the current situation in Damaraland. [This prompted the Foreign Office to add: '*hic haeret*']. All that remains of its original capital stock of 1,548,000 Marks is a sum of approximately 150,000 Marks which will have been eaten up by current expenses unless we succeed in obtaining a substantial income from the Protectorate. It would be impossible for the company to defray the cost of a military expedition into Hereroland. Nor can it be the affair of private parties to restore the authority of the Empire in a territory such as South West Africa where sovereignty is exercised not by a chartered company, but by the Empire itself. The private German interests there depend on the Reich [The Foreign Office added: 'No, on the local chief's] for protection.' At the end of this petition we find a request to take appropriate measures "to afford our company the protection of the Reich so that it may exercise and assert its rights and interests in Damaraland."¹⁴⁴

In the event of both courses of action (military intervention by the Reich or by the German South West Africa Company) being rejected, Goering had yet another recipe up his sleeve: to turn the Nama against the Herero.¹⁴⁵ This proposal was supported by the *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung*, the *Koloniales Jahrbuch* and Dr. Schwarz, leader of a mining expedition to South West Africa. Mission Inspector Büttner, when consulted about this matter by the Foreign Office in Berlin, strongly advised them against playing the Witboois or other Nama tribes off against the Herero. He warned that this would in no way brighten the prospects for the German colonialists in South West Africa.

Büttner made a proposal of his own which was then taken up by the Foreign Office. He suggested sending a band of about 20 soldiers, disguised as explorers, to South West Africa with the aim of capturing Robert Lewis and removing him from there.¹⁴⁶

The Herero Provoked

The small German force which arrived in South West Africa in late June 1889 were under the command of Captain Curt von François, the very epitome of the Prussian soldier. Since there was no regular steamship service between Germany and South West Africa at that time,¹⁴⁷ they depended on English ships to get to their destination.¹⁴⁸ For this reason alone the military unit had to pose as a "group of explorers"¹⁴⁹ if they wanted to disembark unmolested at Walvis Bay, which was in English hands. François had received clear instructions from the German Foreign Office. His mission was to arrest or expel Robert Lewis and other European "ringleaders", but under no circumstances was he to turn his force against the Africans, least of all against the Herero.¹⁵⁰ But François felt his instructions lacked clarity and, therefore, he interpreted them as follows: "To begin with, I did not consider it at all possible to detain Lewis or other agitators without applying force against natives. . . . Possible recourse to force was also mentioned in that

passage of the instructions which said that the troops were authorized to act if individuals failed to obey their orders. . . . Generally speaking, I felt that I had been given some latitude regarding the use of force and the exercise of power."¹⁵¹ Before long, François's peculiar way of interpreting his instructions had its first results.

But of one thing François was keenly aware: "Notwithstanding the small size of his force, the colonial administration had taken an important step in sending it to the colony because this was an admission that the German South West Africa Company were incapable of exercising Sovereignty over the colony. After the Government had sent out a Commissioner in 1885, this was the second fundamental step in transforming the company's possession into a crown colony."¹⁵²

François had been in South West Africa for less than six weeks when the first incident with the Herero occurred at Otjimbingwe. The German soldiers had been accommodated in buildings of the German South West Africa Company located in the centre of the settlement. Since these buildings were allegedly difficult to defend and François consequently lived in constant fear of a Herero attack, he asked for a more suitable place outside Otjimbingwe. When the Herero proved disinclined to grant his request, this drew the following comment from Capt. François: "That the natives were the owners of the land, free to do as they pleased, could not be disputed by words, but only by armed might."¹⁵³ He decided to withdraw his soldiers from Otjimbingwe without a word to the Herero. The latter, who had not failed to notice his hostile behaviour, sent a handful of men after him. But as François was unwilling to negotiate with them, he forced his way forward "military style", his soldiers hitting out with the butts of their rifles. He marched on to Tsaobis where he entrenched himself.¹⁵⁴

François's brusque handling of the Herero was attributable to his attitude towards the Africans, which he described himself in these words: "The Europeans have failed to give the black man the right kind of treatment. They have made too many concessions, granting all his wishes without bearing in mind that this is only interpreted as a sign of weakness. Nothing but relentless severity will lead to success."¹⁵⁵ He hated the Herero, in particular, so that even Chancellor Nels wrote in a report to Bismarck: "The Captain finds it difficult to subdue his anger about the Herero and, as set out in the instructions, to avoid any war with a tribe."¹⁵⁶ François's warlike posture induced the missionary Viehe to infer that "for the Captain it is a foregone conclusion that war will break out between him and the Herero sooner or later."¹⁵⁷

The events in Otjimbingwe and certain other incidents in the days that followed had shown the Herero that François was out to provoke them. Samuel Maharero, son of the Supreme Chief of the Herero, therefore wrote to François: "I gather from the way you act that you are at war with us rather than at peace." He urged him to return to Germany.¹⁵⁸ So François had managed in less than six weeks to incur the open hostility of the Herero whereas his instructions had been to foster peaceful relations with them.

The next logical step for François was to call for reinforcements to bring his force up to 50 men¹⁵⁹ and then to 150 only fourteen days later. He wrote: "In order to straighten matters out here, it is necessary to crush the Herero and to drive their friends, the English, out of the country. To achieve this would require no more than 140 infantrymen and 10 gunners in full combat gear plus two pieces of light artillery."¹⁶⁰ Even the material incentive was not lacking: "The larger the force the greater the benefits resulting from the capture of the sizeable cattle herds of the Herero (approx. 200,000 head)."¹⁶¹

In his book about German South West Africa, François later justified his actions against the Herero: "By mid-November the situation in Hereroland had greatly improved because of the force's crackdown on English agitators and *the reprisals taken against the Herero*."¹⁶² [My emphasis – H. D.] The scattering of Germans who had remained in South West Africa were quick to indicate their approval. Thus the merchant, Schmerenbeck, wrote: "Your energetic and vigorous action over the English issue has completely upset the Herero. It's a pity they haven't hanged a couple of them right away, as rumour here first had it. I feel that exemplary action like that would have had a salutary effect because the Herero need to be ruled with an iron hand lest they think we're afraid of them or don't mean business."¹⁶³ Statements like that prompted François to conclude: "With the exception of the Herero missionaries, virtually everyone in the Protectorate was convinced that the Herero had to be taught a lesson."¹⁶⁴ However, François was doing the missionaries an injustice in assuming that unlike the other Germans living in South West Africa they were too weakkneed to wish his "energetic" policies success. This will be seen from a letter of the missionary Redeker in Otjimbingwe, which shows that the missionaries in South West Africa, at least some of them, were not to be outdone by other racist and chauvinistic Germans when it came to clamouring for war. The letter says: "As far as we know, the Captain has settled on war against the Herero . . . We who are in constant touch with the people, faced as we are with the choice of taking sides, believe it is high time the Damara were brought to heel, this being indeed in their best interests. The young are impudent and haughty beyond endurance. I feel that once the Damara have had a taste of the whip they will become decent chaps willing to listen to their missionaries. We have treated them with love and charity long enough, only to find that they are now playing old Harry with us."¹⁶⁵

Since Berlin was at that time still in two minds about what to do with South West Africa, whether to keep it or not, the Foreign Office was highly displeased with Captain François for having exceeded his instructions and, in so doing, compromising the German position on South West Africa.¹⁶⁶ In a decree issued on 9 November 1889 François was exhorted to obey his instructions to the letter, and his plans for war against the Herero were rejected. As this was not considered a sufficient guarantee that the Captain would actually carry out his orders, he was also advised to leave any political talks with the Africans in the hands of the Deputy Commissioner, Nels.¹⁶⁷ As an additional precaution, the previously recalled

Imperial Commissioner, Goering, was sent back to South West Africa "to soothe the anger which Captain François's actions had provoked among the Herero."¹⁶⁸ But even this proved ineffective because this civil servant was only too willing to take his cues from a military man, and before long he would sing the same tune as François. For the rest, Captain François's persistent calls for reinforcements to be sent to South West Africa were successful. In January 1890 the so-called protective force was increased to 50 men. François commented: "I had, in fact, nothing to do with the troops. Indeed, it was no longer necessary to bring it up to the level of 50, but I welcomed the decision all the same."¹⁶⁹

Official and Commercial Plans for South West Africa

The lack of official interest in South West Africa can be traced back to the year 1886 when the German South West Africa Company ceased operations. It reached its nadir in 1888 with the collapse of the German "Protectorate" in Hereroland. When by mid-1889 the assets of the German South West Africa Company had dwindled to a mere 110,000 Marks, it was clear that within a year or two the company would be at the end of its resources. German financiers were in no mood to invest further capital in the territory as they had made abundantly plain on previous occasions. But what was to become of the country once the company's resources were exhausted? Since the German Foreign Office, guided by considerations of domestic policy, was unwilling to depart from the colonial policy mapped out by Bismarck, all the indications were that the colony would soon have to be abandoned. It was no wonder, then, that when Joseph Chamberlain suggested in a talk with Herbert Bismarck in March 1889 that South West Africa might be exchanged for Heligoland,¹⁷⁰ this proposal was well received. Although at first given serious consideration in Germany, the deal failed to materialize because Bismarck's successor chose East African possessions as a *quid pro quo* for Heligoland.

As long as the Wilhelmstrasse adhered to Bismarck's colonial policy, it was totally dependent on the German South West Africa Company as far as South West Africa was concerned. In 1885 the company had fallen over themselves to stress their purely "patriotic" interest in Lüderitz's possessions (to prevent them passing into English hands). A few years later, having found "patriotism" too costly an affair, they acquiesced, without a moment's hesitation, in British proposals that they sell the company's possessions and rights in South West Africa. At first, Mr. Kington, the previously mentioned associate of Robert Lewis, contacted the German Consul-General in Cape Town in late December 1888, offering a sum of two million Marks for the territory. Then, in the spring of 1889, a Dutchman by the name of Groll who had made his home in England called on the Berlin office of the German South West Africa Company to inquire whether and on what terms the company was prepared to sell all or some of its assets in South West Africa.¹⁷¹ With

the company only too willing to make such a deal, a contract was drawn up after lengthy negotiations on 13 September 1889, under the terms of which the bulk of the company's estates and its mining concessions were to be sold for three million Marks. The company only wanted to retain the land south of latitude 26°, i.e. the coastal strip near Angra Pequena which had been obtained from the Bethanie people. The area to be sold consisted of 210,000 square kilometres of land and 290,000 square kilometres of mining concessions.¹⁷² If the bargain had been concluded, the German South West Africa Company would have made a lucrative deal as it had spent only 1.5 million Marks to acquire the territory. To disguise its profit-making interests it declared that the money would be used to develop the area remaining under its control.¹⁷³ But it refused steadfastly to commit itself on this matter.¹⁷⁴

F. J. Groll acted as front man for a group of English capitalists led by Charles Cooper and Frederick Clarke. Far from being associated with English monopoly capital, this group was exclusively interested in Stock Exchange dealings and without any political ambitions.

The contract between the German South West Africa Company and Groll was subject to approval by the Reich Chancellor. This was a difficult matter for the German Foreign Office to decide. It prepared four expert opinions on the question of whether the Chancellor should endorse the contract or not. There was agreement that the German South West Africa Company should continue to exist.¹⁷⁵ If the contract came to nought the company, its assets down to 60,000 Marks, would have had to go into liquidation within a year or less.¹⁷⁶ To prevent this happening, it was necessary to approve the contract, which would at least hold out the hope of retaining South West Africa as a German possession.¹⁷⁷ On the other hand, the Foreign Office was fully aware that public opinion in Germany would interpret such a move as the abandonment of South West Africa. It was, therefore, essential to take measures that would not create the impression "that the sale of the German South West Africa Company puts an end to German influence in the Protectorate."¹⁷⁸ This came rather close to squaring the circle as it could not be denied that, in the event of seven-eighths of the company's land being sold, South West Africa would become economically dependent on Britain. This, in turn, was bound to have implications for the political situation in the territory.

Although the German Foreign Office, in a memorandum drawn up for Bismarck, advocated endorsement of the contract,¹⁷⁹ the Chancellor, out of domestic considerations, put off his decision until early 1890 by which time a changed situation made it easier for him to commit himself. Hopes of finding a German consortium to make the purchase,¹⁸⁰ a mounting press campaign against the projected sale to the Groll syndicate,¹⁸¹ a resolution against the contract adopted by the Cologne branch of the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft and supported by 64 other departments of that organization,¹⁸² and a report from the German Consul-General in Cape Town saying that "the population, capital, enterprise and labour are increasingly becoming non-German in the Protectorate"¹⁸³—all these developments

ultimately led the Imperial Chancellor to withhold his consent to the Groll contract on 25 February 1890.¹⁸⁴

However, the Groll Syndicate did not acknowledge defeat so rapidly. It enlisted the services of some Germans to act as a front instead of the Dutchman. A Hamburg lawyer, Dr. Julius Scharlach,¹⁸⁵ became the most important representative of the Syndicate's interest. This man soon dissociated himself from his "feeble" English backers to make his mark as the biggest speculator in German colonial history. Scharlach, originally related to the Nobel trust, later joined the camp of Nobel's South African rival, Cecil Rhodes.¹⁸⁶ In the spring of 1890 he entered the service of the Groll Syndicate. After protracted negotiations, which will not be examined in detail here, a contract was signed on 14 February 1891, the Reich Chancellor indicating his approval only four days later.¹⁸⁷ The contract was roughly equivalent to that proposed by Groll in 1889, but this time all parties were Germans.¹⁸⁸ In England, the Groll Syndicate was opposed by Cecil Rhodes. Without intervening personally, he launched a campaign to the effect that it was unpatriotic for an Englishman to lend himself to a Groll undertaking because South West Africa, even without that contract, would have to be abandoned by Germany and fall into English hands. Rhodes's opposition proved an insurmountable obstacle for the Groll people with the result that in February 1892 they found themselves compelled to declare that they had failed in their attempt to establish a company. The German South West Africa Company greatly deplored this development, but was delighted to pocket the down payment of 200,000 Marks which it was entitled to keep if the contract failed to materialize.

Although the Groll Syndicate had not given up its project altogether, Scharlach began to strike out in a new direction in late March 1892. Without informing his erstwhile principals, he entered into his own negotiations with the Colonial Department¹⁸⁹ about a contract on completely new terms. The result of these negotiations was that in August/September 1892 Scharlach was granted the so-called Damaraland concession,¹⁹⁰ comprising 13,000 square kilometres of territory and 72,000 square miles of mining concessions. The area was not part of the land owned by the German South West Africa Company. As the Imperial Colonial Department put it, this was "no man's land". But in actual fact it belonged to the Herero.¹⁹¹

The German South West Africa Company, which had been completely ignored in these transactions, thus lost its monopoly on South West Africa. For this reason it attacked Scharlach bitterly.¹⁹² In England, Scharlach founded a new South West Africa Company (SWAC),¹⁹³ which only a few months later passed openly into the hands of Rhodes's agents.¹⁹⁴ Consequently, the end of the year 1892 saw the beginning of a process which in a matter of years brought South West Africa under British economic control.

Apart from the so-called protection treaties of 1884-85, which formed the basis of German domination in South West Africa, no other accords had been concluded in the latter half of the '80s. With an English rush for land and mining

concessions in the southern part of the colony in 1889, the German Imperial Commissioner, Dr. Heinrich Goering, received a directive from the Wilhelmstrasse, saying "that it seems desirable, considering our economic and mining interests in the southern part of our sphere of interest, to conclude protection and friendship treaties with a view to incorporating into the Protectorate those areas not yet placed under German protection, viz. large portions of Greater Namaqualand, and the territory of the Gibeon Witboois, the Veldschoendragers, the Franzmanns and the Bondelswarts. More recently, the area of the Bondelswarts adjoining the English Cape Colony . . . has assumed growing importance for us. On these grounds I beg you, as soon as circumstances in Hereroland permit, to visit the aforementioned areas and induce the local chiefs to recognize German protection and to conclude treaties to this effect."¹⁹⁵

The method used to secure a "protection treaty" with the Bondelswarts, who as recently as 1885 had firmly opposed such a treaty, is highly instructive of the close cooperation which took place between the German Government and the big land companies in South West Africa to the detriment of the Africans.

Most important among the English concession-hunters in the southern portion of South West Africa was the Kharaskhoma Syndicate,¹⁹⁶ which in late 1889 sent an expedition led by Dr. Theophil Hahn to the Bondelswarts area. Hahn, quite unimpressed by the fact that the concessions he had set his sights on had been acquired by another speculator several months previously, worked on Chief Willem Christian so long—offering liquor, tobacco, coffee, and indirectly even ammunition¹⁹⁷—that the Chief revoked the old concession and granted the Kharaskhoma Syndicate what it was seeking.

To gain his ends with the Veldschoendragers, Hahn even interfered openly in the election of a chief.¹⁹⁸ As their leader Hans Hendrik had already given the mining rights away, he ordered him to be deposed and replaced by his younger brother Jan Hendrik, who then demonstrated his gratitude by transferring the concessions to Hahn.

In the case of the Nama group living in the Keetmanshoop area, the wily Hahn resorted to yet another stratagem. Since Kaptein Jonathan Zeib had also already sold the mining rights to someone else, Hahn convinced the Chief of the Bondelswarts, Willem Christian, that only he, as Supreme Chief of Keetmanshoop, was entitled to grant concessions. Thereupon Christian revoked the older concession and accorded a new one to Hahn, who had thus succeeded in getting everything he wanted within a very short period of time, in accordance with the recommendation of his principals that he might "promise anything, but not in writing."¹⁹⁹

It goes almost without saying that the Rhenish missionaries were also involved in these shady transactions. One of them, C. Wandres at Warmbad, helped Hahn to wrest a concession from the Bondelswarts, tempted as he was by the prospect of obtaining free shares and other financial support from the Kharaskhoma Syndicate.

Under the terms of the contracts signed with the Kharaskhoma Syndicate, an

area covering 67,000 square kilometres passed into the hands of the English company. With the total areas of the three Nama tribes concerned extending over little more than 70,000 square kilometres,²⁰⁰ the two chiefs had acted very irresponsibly in selling away virtually all their tribal land.

Collusion between the Kharaskhoma Syndicate and the German Government

In the following period, the German Government acted in collusion with the Kharaskhoma Syndicate at the expense of the Nama. As the Syndicate's contracts were subject to approval by the German Government, the English company was anxious to obtain the goodwill of the Government by proposing that the three Nama tribes be placed under German "protection". The missionary Wandres noted: "Hahn and Gibson were eager to persuade the three southernmost tribes to accept German protection. At first, they depicted the blessings of such protection in glowing terms, and then they raised the spectre of the *furor teutonicus*. Of course, they did not do so out of love for Germany, but because the concessions were subject to ratification by the German Government."²⁰¹ After they had worked on Willem Christian long enough, a so-called treaty of protection was concluded with the Bondelswarts on 21 August 1890.²⁰²

Nevertheless, the Kharaskhoma Syndicate was disappointed in its hopes of having its concessions endorsed quickly by the German Government. The English company therefore felt that it was necessary to remind Berlin from time to time that it should furnish some evidence of its gratitude. A memorandum of the Kharaskhoma Syndicate emphasized that the company's Directors "are still morally entitled to Government support ... on account of the services they have rendered Germany in South West Africa. The Syndicate has gone to considerable expense—over 6,000 Marks—to take the chiefs of the Veldschoendragers to Warmbad so that they might see Dr. Goering and seek German protection."²⁰³ Yet the German Foreign Office was reluctant to endorse the contracts because the rights accorded therein were so sweeping "that their unqualified recognition would have been tantamount to surrendering the country and its economic future to the concessionnaires."²⁰⁴ After the Colonial Department had adopted a dilatory approach for a long time²⁰⁵ it finally entered into an arrangement with the Kharaskhoma Syndicate, concluding a contract that curtailed the concessions somewhat. But the English company still retained 41,000 out of the 67,000 square kilometres originally granted to it.

Less important than moments of tension between the German Government and the Kharaskhoma Syndicate was their basic willingness to cooperate when it came to exploiting the Africans and stripping them of their rights. The Imperial Commissioner, Dr. Goering, expressly confirmed that only the pressure exerted by the syndicate had induced the Nama chiefs to sign so-called protection treaties and that the English company was not pursuing any political, i.e. anti-German, interests.

Under the impact of the German military presence in South West Africa, the Herero agreed in 1890 to submit to German "protection" once again. Since they were still at war with Hendrik Witbooi, they were none too eager to antagonize the Germans, with their superior weaponry, as well. It had not yet dawned on them that the penetration of South West Africa by German colonialists had completely altered the situation there, making the Germans the principal enemy of the Africans. Despite recognition of German protection, anti-German feeling ran high among the Herero owing to the aggressive stance of Captain Curt von François. Even Commissioner Goering had to concede that "Maharero would be only too glad to see them [the German force-H. D.] go back to Germany as soon as possible, putting an end to the German Protectorate. These views are shared by most Herero despite all assurances to the contrary."²⁰⁶

The Occupation of Windhoek

Anti-German sentiments among the Herero increased after the occupation of Windhoek in October 1890. Windhoek, situated in the middle of South West Africa, was undoubtedly Herero territory. But they had withdrawn from there temporarily in order to establish some kind of buffer zone between themselves and the Nama. François claims in his book that he regarded the Windhoek area as "no man's land".²⁰⁷ The records show, however, that he knew very well that Windhoek formed part of Hereroland. Indeed, he wanted to know in March 1890 whether Maharero was willing to cede Windhoek to him so that he might station his garrison there. When Maharero gave a non-committal reply²⁰⁸ François decided to occupy Windhoek without permission, presenting the Herero with a *fait accompli*. "The expected objections of the Herero came too late," was his laconic comment.²⁰⁹

The older Maharero, Supreme Chief of the Herero, died on 27 October 1890. Although Nikodemus was first in line to succeed him, the choice fell upon Samuel Maharero, the candidate of the missionaries.²¹⁰

Relations between the Germans and the Herero remained at a low ebb, especially after the seizure of Windhoek. As late as 1892 the area controlled by the German force was confined to Windhoek and its surroundings. In both Namaland and Hereroland (to say nothing of Amboland) the Germans were considered only a negligible quantity. This became apparent when in 1892 Lieutenant Bülow was ordered to escort an English expedition of the South West Africa Company to Otavi (in northern Hereroland). The lieutenant found it impossible to carry out this order because the Herero were opposed to it. He was forced to turn back.²¹¹ The English expedition were allowed to pass after they had given assurances that they had nothing to do with the German Government, that they would only examine but not exploit the mine they were looking for, and that they acknowledged the Herero's ownership of the mine. This episode clearly underlined the

realities of power in South West Africa eight years after the Germans had taken formal possession of it. They were still being looked upon as unwelcome guests who had established themselves in the country in a roundabout way through their so-called protection treaties.

Captain François was keenly aware of this fact yet, as long as his instructions remained unchanged, there was little he could do in South West Africa. He used the time available to make systematic preparations for a confrontation with the Africans. Having failed to persuade Berlin of the need for a warlike posture, he convinced the Imperial Commissioner, Dr. Heinrich Goering, of the correctness of his policy. Goering, readily falling in with François's views on the matter, began to demand that the latter's instructions be annulled, in other words, that the Captain be given a free hand to go to war with the Africans. The Commissioner felt that the troops should be used against Hendrik Witbooi first. Completely misjudging the situation, Goering declared: "I rule out any possibility of [François's - H. D.] failure or defeat."²¹² However, the Imperial Chancellor, Count Leo von Caprivi, continued to temporize on the German colonies in general and on South West Africa in particular. On 1 December 1890 he decreed that the instructions given to François on 19 May 1889 whereby the German force was not to take military action against Africans should remain in force.²¹³ But despite the Chancellor's refusal, François remained obsessed with the idea of waging war. All the indications were that he was supported by influential quarters in Berlin, notably in the top echelons of the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft and the German South West Africa Company.²¹⁴ As a result, François presented the Foreign Office on 15 April 1891 with another detailed "plan for action against Hendrik Witbooi".

The lack of official interest in South West Africa during the latter half of the 1880s became even more pronounced in the first two years of Caprivi's chancellorship. In Caprivi's eyes the colonies were a burden hampering his foreign policy, which was characterized by Anglophilia and Russophobia.²¹⁵ His position on South West Africa became clear in September 1890 when he wrote in a memorandum regarding the sales plans of the German South West Africa Company: "But what will happen if the company finds no buyers? . . . Will it be worth maintaining the Imperial government machinery in West Africa after the company has gone into liquidation? Will it be worth the effort to increase the Reich's commitment?"²¹⁶ A few months later, speaking in the Reichstag, he went as far as to propose a "test year,"²¹⁷ a phrase that was to cause quite a stir. This "ominous word", as colonial zealots termed it, was opposed by the Colonial Department and especially by its Director, Dr. Krauel, with a vigour that would have been worthy of a better cause. In both oral and written statements he argued over and over again that the phrase had been totally misunderstood. The Imperial Chancellor, he said, had never had any intentions of giving up South West Africa. The phrase in question had "not applied to the colony itself, but merely to the protective force stationed there."²¹⁸ Despite all the casuistry of the Colonial Department, Caprivi (and the Emperor) thought differently about the matter as can be seen from the records of the Imperial

Colonial Office. The Chancellor made a note in 1891 which Krauel deemed so dangerous that he kept it in a sealed envelope, although only a handful of civil servants had access to the files anyway. The note reads: "I have informed His Majesty [of a memo prepared by Nordenflycht about South West Africa-H. D.]. *The Emperor is prepared to give up South West Africa if necessary so that all energies may be focused on East Africa.*"²¹⁹ [My emphasis-H.D.]

English Capital Comes to South West Africa

As Caprivi had declared that before the protective force could be reinforced it would need somewhat more to protect and as German capital for South West Africa was not forthcoming, the Colonial Department agreed at last to allow British capital into the country. It felt that this was better than no capital at all. The records show to what extent the Director of the Colonial Department supported the aspirations of the Groll Syndicate. He issued detailed instructions as to when and how the English company would have to be established to avoid a conflict with the Reichstag and he delayed the founding of the Kharaskhoma Syndicate so that the Groll Syndicate would be the first on the British money market. But all this was to no avail because the Groll Syndicate found Cecil Rhodes's opposition too formidable a barrier. Dr. Paul Kayser, head of the Colonial Department, was infuriated by the failure of the long-cherished plans to sell the German South West Africa Company. In early 1892 he made a final attempt to induce the "patriots" in the company to increase their capital stock. He attended a meeting of the company's Supervisory Council on 2 March 1892 where he pointed out, among other things: "The first essential for the company is to demonstrate by positive action that it is certain to make a profit out of its ventures in the colony. At present, it is both necessary and possible to raise the capital stock. Failing this, the Government would prefer immediate liquidation, which would clear the way for other undertakings, to a continuation of the current unsatisfactory state of affairs. The company is an obstacle to many undertakings. If it is removed, other investors may be prepared to try their luck in the Protectorate or else it will become clear that the German people have neither the means nor the desire to maintain their colonies in South West Africa. If the company goes into liquidation, all those interested will lose everything. If, on the other hand, the capital stock is increased, this will open up the prospect of a return on the funds originally contributed."²²⁰ Although Dr. Kayser used all his powers of persuasion, the outcome was very meagre indeed: after six months of negotiations members of the German South West Africa Company offered 21,000 Marks instead of the 450,000 Marks his plans had envisaged. The company's comment was: "Under these circumstances the Board of Directors believe that the fund-raising project should be abandoned for the time being."²²¹

So the only way out was to bring in English capital. The result was the granting of the Damaraland concession which in no time at all passed into the hands of

Cecil Rhodes. The Colonial Department took note of this development, but gave no comment. Indeed, when Nordenflycht, the man in charge of South West African affairs in the Department, learned that the Rothschild banking concern was the force behind a company that had obtained a concession in South West Africa, he observed: "It would appear desirable in my eyes to keep alive this establishment's interest in South West Africa."²²² Incidentally, it had been Nordenflycht who, in the absence of Dr. Kayser, had made the Damaraland concession palatable to the Imperial Chancellor²²³ and had secured its acceptance. The records reveal that initially the Groll Syndicate had offered him a directorship in the British company they were planning to found.²²⁴ Afterwards, he served on the boards of several English land companies in South West Africa which were controlled by Rhodes. Even the Imperial Commissioner, Dr. Goering, did not scruple to accept directorships in such companies some years later. So what emerges here is that close personal ties existed not only between the Colonial Department and German finance capital, but also between this division of the German Foreign Office and the international, i.e. English, *haute bourgeoisie*.

While the Colonial Department continued to allow English capital into South West Africa so that there might be something to protect, influential German colonial interests were busy persuading the Chancellor that the so-called protective force would have to be strengthened first, before capital could be expected to be channelled to South West Africa. It was chiefly members of the executive of the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft and the German South West Africa Company who were trying to influence the Reich Chancellor in this direction. Their endeavours reached a culminating point at a meeting held in June 1892 between Chancellor Caprivi, Colonial Department officials and two brothers of Captain François, who set out to prove that only a greater military presence would improve the situation in South West Africa for the German Government. It seems that roughly from that time onwards Caprivi found it virtually impossible to stand up to the pressure from pro-colonial circles any longer. As everyone familiar with the situation agreed, it was obvious that once the garrison force had been increased Captain François would no longer hesitate to strike a first blow against Hendrik Witbooi.

The Nama and Herero Make Peace

Witbooi, firmly opposed to the idea of German protection, had consolidated his power in Namaland in the late '80s. In spite of the German military presence the war between the Nama and Herero was continuing unabated. From the German viewpoint this inter-African conflict had its advantages as well as drawbacks, the merits outweighing the demerits. As long as the Africans were locked in a bloody dispute, the Germans found themselves in the role of an outsider who was biding his time.²²⁵ On the other hand, the war between Nama and Herero made it impossible for Germans to settle in South West Africa to any large extent.

In 1890 the Imperial Commissioner, Dr. Goering, made his first feeble attempt to intervene in this inter-African conflict. In a letter dated 20 May 1890 he called on Hendrik Witbooi to stop making war on the Herero under German protection.²²⁶ Ostensibly Witbooi was unimpressed because, thereafter, the war showed no signs of abating. Yet, as can be seen from Witbooi's diary, Goering's letter made it clear to him for the first time that the coming of the Germans had changed the picture in South West Africa.

Within days of receiving the Commissioner's message, Hendrik Witbooi wrote a lengthy letter to Samuel Maharero,²²⁷ paving the way for a *rapprochement* between the Nama and the Herero. In this letter, in which he expressly referred to Goering's message to him, he pointed out to Maharero the unnatural character of an alliance between the Herero and the Germans. He said that the only reason why the Herero had given up their independence was their hatred of the Witboois, but this was extremely short-sighted as in the event of the Witboois' defeat the Herero would soon share their fate. The war between the Nama and the Herero, he pointed out, was of an entirely different nature than a war between Africans and Germans. There was always the possibility of peace between the Nama and the Herero.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Nama-Herero war was still going on, Hendrik Witbooi's letter, which showed him to be a man of keen intellect, marked the first step towards peace among the Africans. However, it took more than two years for the idea of peace between Nama and Herero to become reality.

The François brothers pretended that they were interested in peace between the Herero and the Nama, but in actual fact they viewed Hendrik Witbooi's peace overtures with mounting suspicion. The "spectre" of peace prompted the Germans to speed up their own preparations for war against the Witboois. One of the precautions they were taking was to spy out Hornkranz, Hendrik Witbooi's residence, a mission entrusted to Lieutenant François in March 1891. He gave the following account of it: "It was highly important for us to reconnoitre the residence of the audacious robber chief which all travellers had described as an impregnable stronghold. Pretending to make a friendly visit I rode to Hornkranz . . . in March 1891 . . . In the evening I asked Hendrik for permission to take a look around, my real intentions being to inspect sources of water supply and potential weak points in their defences."²²⁸ The result of the reconnaissance mission was: "The only way to capture the place without artillery is to mount a surprise attack, the level terrain being crossed at night so that the forward defences will already have fallen by daybreak."²²⁹ The attack staged on Hornkranz in April 1893 exactly followed this pattern.

Before it took place, there were several more attempts by the Germans to induce Hendrik Witbooi to accept German "protection". But he carefully avoided the traps that had been laid for him, proudly refusing to give up his independence. Captain François had to concede that Hendrik Witbooi was "an implacable opponent of any form of submission to German rule".²³⁰

Witbooi did not lose sight of his aim of making peace with the Herero. For this purpose, he addressed numerous letters to Samuel Maharero,²³¹ who initially preferred to adopt a wait-and-see attitude. Yet in the middle of 1892 the negotiations reached their crucial stage after Witbooi had brought in a mediator: Hermanus van Wyk, kaptein of the Rehobothers.²³² When word came that Boers were planning to settle in South West Africa, this acted as a catalyst accelerating the proceedings. Finally, in November 1892, the Nama and the Herero, who had been at war throughout the 19th century, concluded peace in order to cope better with the new situation that had arisen with the German penetration of South West Africa.

Notes

- 1 Cf. Rohrbach, Paul, *Südwestafrika*, Berlin, 1907, p. 2, *Deutsche Kolonialwirtschaft*, Vol. 1.
- 2 In the late 19th century South West Africa was so sparsely populated that there was only one inhabitant for every three square kilometres of territory.
- 3 Cf. Irle, J., *Die Herero. Ein Beitrag zur Landes-, Volks- und Missionskunde*, Gütersloh, 1906, p. 171. The inhospitable nature of the country appears to have afforded the South African people some measure of protection from slave traders. Angola, on the other hand, was the scene of large-scale slaving expeditions.
- 4 As regards the Ovambo, cf. Tönjes, H., *Ovamboland*, Berlin, 1911; Angebauer, K., *Ovambo*, Berlin, 1927; *Das deutsche Kolonialreich*, edited by H. Meyer, Vol. 2, Leipzig/Vienna, 1914, pp. 249 ff.; Schinz, Hans, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika. Forschungsreisen durch die deutschen Schutzgebiete Gross-Nama- und Hereroland, 1884-1887*, Oldenburg/Leipzig, 1891, pp. 271 ff., as well as Report on the Natives of South West Africa and their Treatment by Germany (hereafter referred to as *Report*), London, 1918, pp. 134 ff.
- 5 Cf. Gunther, John, *Afrika von Innen*, Konstanz/Stuttgart, 1957, p. 547.
- 6 Mostly described as eastern Herero in early literature.
- 7 The Tjimba are a numerically insignificant group of impoverished Herero. Owning no cattle, they are scattered throughout the Kaokoveld.
- 8 In his 1877 report the British Commissioner W. C. Palgrave estimated the number of Herero at 85,000 Cf. *Report*, p. 34. This figure 80,000 is given in Büttner, C. G., *Das Hinterland von Walfischbay and Angra Pequena*, Heidelberg 1884, p. 328, *Sammlung von Vorträgen für das deutsche Volk*, Vol. 12; Schwabe, Kurd, *Mit Schwert und Pflug in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, 2nd edition, Berlin, 1904, p. 454; and Westermann, Diedrich, *Geschichte Afrikas. Staatenbildungen südlich der Sahara*, Cologne, 1952, p. 444. Leutwein put their number at 70,000 to 80,000. Cf. Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, Berlin 1906, p. 11. The missionary Irle, one of the greatest authorities on the Herero, who conducted a census at the request of the Mission Conference in 1874, even spoke of 90,000 to 100,000. Cf. Irle, J., *Die Herero*, op. cit., p. 52. The reason for dwelling on this point is that the figures cited here were often called in question by the exponents of German imperialism after the genocide of the Herero. As an example, Karl Dove wrote in *Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, 2nd edition, Berlin, 1913, p. 213: "Statistical evidence obtained in recent years corroborates the indisputable fact that there used to be a widespread tendency to exaggerate their numbers quite considerably."
- 9 Cf. Olderogge, D. A. and Potekhin, I. I., *Die Völker Afrikas. Ihre Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Vol. 2, Berlin, 1961, p. 645.

- 10 Cf. Loth, Heinrich, *Die christliche Mission in Südwestafrika. Zur destruktiven Rolle der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft beim Prozess der Staatsbildung in Südwestafrika (1842 bis 1893)*, Berlin, 1963, p. 8. Studien zur Kolonialgeschichte und Geschichte der nationalen und kolonialen Befreiungsbewegung, edited by Walter Markov, Vol. 9. Since H. Loth, in his monograph which covers a somewhat earlier period than this study, deals at some length with the socio-economic problems of the Herero and Nama (pp. 17 ff.), these are not examined in detail here. Rather, Loth's findings have been préciséd.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 24.
- 12 In early sources the Nama are almost invariably described as "Hottentots". This word has not been used by this author because of its derogatory connotations, its original meaning being "stammerer". Cf. *Report*, p. 68, and Sik, Endre, *Histoire de l'Afrique Noire*, Vol. 1, Budapest, 1961, p. 16, note 1.
- 13 Khoikhoi means "man of man", i. e. real man. Cf. *Die Völker Afrikas*, Vol. 2, p. 642; Sik, Endre, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 80 ff., and Schinz, Hans, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
- 14 In the late 19th century the Nama proper comprised the following tribes: the Veldschoendragers, the Franzmanns, the Zwartboois, the so-called Red Nation, the Topnaars, the Zeib people and the Bodelswarts.
- 15 Towards the end of the 19th century there were also the following Orlam tribes: the Witboois, the Berseba community, the Khauas, the Bethanie people and what had remained of the Afrikaancers. Cf. *Report*, p. 71, and *Deutsches Kolonial-Handbuch*, compiled on the basis of official sources by Rudolf Fitzner, Berlin, 1896, pp. 153 ff.
- 16 Cf. Fischer, E., *Die Rehobother Bastards und das Bastardierungsproblem beim Menschen*, Jena, 1913; *Report*, pp. 121 ff.; Bayer, M., 'Die Nation der Bastards', in ZKKK, Vol. 3, 1906, pp. 625 ff. To avoid the derogatory term 'Bastards', these tribes will henceforth be named after their native locality, e. g. the Rehoboth tribe.
- 17 Cf. Schinz, Hans, *op. cit.*, pp. 123 ff.; *Report*, pp. 103 ff.
- 18 Cf. especially Sik, Endre, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 80 ff. and the entry 'Buschmänner' in *Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon*, edited by Heinrich Schnee, Vol. 1, Leipzig, 1920, pp. 258 ff.
- 19 Loth, Heinrich, *Die Christliche Mission in Südwestafrika*, p. 9. Besides H. Loth's work, another book rich in material about South West Africa's history in the 19th century is Heinrich Vedder's *Das alte Südwestafrika, Südwestafrikas Geschichte bis zum Tode Mahareros 1890*, Berlin, 1934. It must be borne in mind, however, that this is a biased account given from the point of view of the Mission. The Africans protested angrily against Vedder's book, part of which serves as a "history textbook" in schools for the Africans. Cf. Schlosser, Katesa, *Eingeborenkirchen in Süd- und Südwestafrika, ihre Geschichte und Sozialstruktur*, Kiel, 1958, p. 124.
- 20 Cf. Schramm, Percy Ernst, *Deutschland und Übersee*, Brunswick 1950, p. 309.
- 21 Imp. Col. Off. No. 2098, pp. 45-7.
- 22 The Herero's misgivings about the Boers are reflected in a letter which Maharero addressed to the Governor and High Commissioner of Cape Colony on 21 June 1874. It is given in Vedder, Heinrich, *op. cit.*, pp. 542 ff. The colonial policy of the Boers in the 19th century ominously foreshadowed the present-day policy of apartheid. "The Boers display exceptional talent in handling the natives First, they break all resistance with fire and sword, and then they use all the means at their disposal to put those they have subjugated to work." ZKKK, Vol. 8, 1906, p. 23.
- 23 Cf. Loth, Heinrich, *Die christliche Mission in Südwestafrika*, p. 100, note 18.
- 24 Imp. Col. Off. No. 2098, pp. 11-17.

- 25 Imp. Col. Off. No. 2098, pp. 24-31, Büttner's report on the situation of German commercial operations in Damaraland and Namaqualand to the German consul in Cape Town, 12 Nov. 1879.
- 26 Walvis Bay was the gateway to the hinterland of South West Africa. Having secured this gateway, the British felt they could keep any rivals at bay for the time being. The apparent reason for taking possession of Walvis Bay was to prevent the Portuguese penetrating further south from Angola.
- 27 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2098, pp. 40-3, Fabri to the Ger. For. Off., 4 June 1880.
- 28 Cf. Hagen, Maximilian von, *Bismarck's Kolonialpolitik*, Stuttgart/Gotha, 1923, pp. 25 ff. Fabri proceeded to found in 1880 the West German Colonization and Export Association Cf. Kuczynski, Jürgen, *Studien zur Geschichte des deutschen Imperialismus*, Vol. 1, 2nd, revised edition, Berlin, 1952, p. 122.
- 29 The official files do not contain any reference to this conversation.
- 30 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2098, pp. 7-9, Notes on the West Coast of Africa, 7 May 1880. Here we find the first mention (back in 1880!) of the plan to annex Southern Angola. Throughout the German occupation this plan was never abandoned completely. Cf. Drechsler, Horst, 'Deutsche Versuche, das deutsch-englische Abkommen von 1898 über die portugiesischen Kolonien zu realisieren', in *ZfG*, Vol. 9, 1961, pp. 1619 ff.
- 31 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2098, p. 10, Memorandum for Herr von Kusserow, 13 May 1880.
- 32 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2098, pp. 11-17, Fabri to the Ger. For. Off., 3 June 1880.
- 33 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2098, pp. 40-3, Fabri to the Ger. For. Off., 4 June 1880.
- 34 Vedder, Heinrich, *Das alte Südwestafrika*, p. 565.
- 35 Büttner, C. G., *Das Hinterland von Walvischbay und Angra Pequena*, p. 322.
- 36 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2098, p. 2, Limburg-Stirum to Legation Counsellor Jordan, 23. Sept. 1880. Division IA of the German Foreign Office was concerned with matters of "high politics". Until 1880 all colonial matters had been handled by Division II, which was responsible for commercial, consular and transport affairs.
- 37 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2098, p. 40, Fabri to the Ger. For. Off., 4 June 1880.
- 38 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2098, p. 67-71, Kusserow's memorandum, 4 Nov. 1880.
- 39 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2098, p. 81, Granville to Count Münster, 29 Nov. 1880.
- 40 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2099, p. 63, Hoepfner's report 'Reisen in Mossamedes', 25 Dec. 1883. Dr. Hoepfner was later active in South West Africa on behalf of Adolf Lüderitz.
- 41 Fabri was closely associated with the Rhenish industrialist Hasenclever who sent an engineer, Peter Scheidweiler, to South West Africa to obtain mining concessions there.
- 42 A chronological account of the events surrounding Adolf Lüderitz is not given here because they are well known.
- 43 Cf. Schüssler, Wilhelm, *Adolf Lüderitz. Ein deutscher Kampf um Südafrika 1883 bis 1886*, Bremen 1936, p. 79: "No lesser person than Lothar Bucher [a close aide of Bismarck-B. Z.] has said of this indefatigable civil servant intent on making his country a colonial world power that, without his activity and initiative, Prince Bismarck would not have embarked on a German colonial policy. ... After all, he was the first and - for a long time - the only civil servant in the Foreign Office to give serious consideration to the possibility of acquiring German colonies."
- 44 Cf. Lenin, V. I., *Hefte zum Imperialismus*, Berlin 1957, p. 603.
- 45 Cf. Schüssler, Wilhelm, *op. cit.*, pp. 39 ff., 141, 152, 154 ff.
- 46 Cf. *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*, Vol. 8: 'South Africa, Rhodesia and the Protectorates', Cambridge, 1936, pp. 429 ff.; Keppel-Jones, A., *Südafrika*, Berlin, 1952,

- pp. 125 ff. The discovery of diamonds in West Griqualand (Kimberley) caused such excitement in business circles that Britain lost no time in annexing the territory. Similarly, when the goldfields of Witwatersrand were discovered in 1886, this gave rise to the Jameson Raid and the Boer War.
- 47 First in *Kölnische Zeitung*, 9-12 Sept. 1883, later summed up in a lecture by Fabri, Friedrich, "Angra Pequena und Südwestafrika", in *Deutsche Kolonialbestrebungen*, edited by the West German Colonization and Export Association, Elberfeld, 1884.
 - 48 Letter by A. Lüderitz to Richard Leuer, 1 Dec. 1884, published in *Die Erschließung*, pp. 105 ff. Cf. also Gustav Nachtigal's letter to A. Lüderitz, *ibid.*, p. 94.
 - 49 Jäckel, Herbert, *Die Landgesellschaften in den deutschen Schutzgebieten*, Jena, 1909, p. 29.
 - 50 Cf. Loth, Heinrich, *Die christliche Mission in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, p. 97. Lüderitz and his agent Vogelsang were quite aware of this. Cf. *Die Erschließung*, p. 17.
 - 51 Cf. Loth, Heinrich, *Die christliche Mission in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, p. 97.
 - 52 Although the Rhenish missionaries had been instructed to give their full backing to Lilienthal, they supported Lüderitz as well. Cf. Wegner, E. W., *Aus Deutsch-Afrika! Tagebuch-Briefe einer jungen Deutschen aus Angra Pequena (1882-1884)*, Leipzig, 1885, p. 6 = *Die deutschen Kolonialgebiete*, No. 1, and Brückner, G., ed. *Jahrbuch der deutschen Kolonialpolitik und des Exports*, Berlin, 1887, p. 145.
 - 53 Cf. Irle, J., *Die Herero*, *op. cit.*, p. 204, and Wegner, E. W., *op. cit.*, p. 6.
 - 54 Heinrich Vogelsang, who had concluded the agreements of May and August 1883 on Lüderitz's behalf, stated plainly and authoritatively 20 years later, in December 1905, "that we had chiefly ourselves to blame if the natives were so well equipped with arms." ZKKK, Vol. 8, 1906, p. 39.
 - 55 Cf. Rohrbach, Paul, *Dernburg und die Südwestafrikaner*, Berlin, 1911, p. 46.
 - 56 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1538, pp. 3-12, Goering to Bismarck, 15 Sept. 1887.
 - 57 *Die Erschließung*, p. 87.
 - 58 The missionary Bam's role in this affair raised eyebrows even in Berlin's Wilhelmstrasse. A letter addressed by the German Foreign Office to the Ger. SWA Co. on 2 December 1887 says: "The missionary Bam will have to explain why he affixed his signature to the purchasing contract of 25 August 1883 and, in addition, certified the authenticity of Joseph Frederik's statement of 24 November of that year while being fully aware that the Bethanie people believed they would cede only one-fourth of the territory they had actually sold under the terms of the agreement." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1538, pp. 27-8.
 - 59 "Because of the protests of the Bethanie people I have deemed it advisable not to use the term 'geographical miles' in the agreement." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1537, pp. 58-9, Nachtigal to Bismarck, 9 December 1884.
 - 60 The files contain a large number of reports mentioning complaints by the Bethanie people over Lüderitz's fraud. Failure to act on these complaints ultimately led to the Bethanie tribe joining the great Nama uprising in 1904. The matter was finally laid to rest in 1909 after Angelo Golinelli, the civil servant in charge of SWA at the Imp. Col. Off., had ruled that "I do not believe we can do anything about it at this late stage." Imp. Col. Office File No. 1529, p. 90.
 - 61 Cf. Schüssler, Wilhelm, *op. cit.*, p. 85, and *Die Erschließung*, p. 86.
 - 62 Cf. Giesebrecht, Franz, ed., *Die Behandlung der Eingeborenen in den deutschen Kolonien*, Berlin, 1898, pp. 120 ff. About the agreement with the Rehobothers and the crucial part played therein by the missionaries Böhm and Heidmann, cf. DKZ, Vol. 2, 1885, pp. 136 ff.
 - 63 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1539, pp. 43-5.

- 64 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1617, pp. 52-4, Leutwein to Imperial Chancellor Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 29 Oct. 1895.
- 65 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1538, pp. 3-12, Goering to Bismarck, 15 Sept. 1887.
- 66 Cf. also Schramm, Percy Ernst, *op. cit.*, pp. 406 ff. and 411.
- 67 This problem is dealt with at length in Schüssler, Wilhelm, *op. cit.*, pp. 141 ff. Cf. also Schramm, Percy Ernst, *op. cit.*, pp. 312 ff.
- 68 This is, of course, something the standard-bearers of German imperialism are not prepared to admit. Their own version reads like this: "It becomes apparent here that President Kruger was pursuing a policy too clever by half which in the final analysis was bound to spell disaster for his own country. At this historic hour he should have known no other goal than the attainable one of securing a German foothold on the Zulu coast." Schüssler, Wilhelm, *op. cit.*, p. 184. And in another example: "But then the Boers ... failed to recognize the opportunities opening up for them along the non-British coast." Schramm, Percy Ernst, *op. cit.*, p. 313.
- 69 Schüssler, Wilhelm, *op. cit.*, p. 199.
- 70 DKBl, Vol. 9, 1898, Suppl. to 1 Sept. 1898 edition, p. 3.
- 71 DKZ, Vol. 1, 1884, p. 303.
- 72 "... I would consider it to be of the greatest importance to induce the Portuguese to renounce their sovereignty over the Great Fish Bay and the Kunene River area south of it, this being anyway a matter of controversy." Bismarck, with his keen grasp of diplomatic possibilities, curbed Lüderitz's expansionist urge with this marginal note: "A leasing arrangement rather than renunciation should be the aim." *Die Erschließung*, pp. 70 ff.
- 73 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 67, and ZKKK, Vol. 11, 1909, p. 321.
- 74 Cape Argus, 7 Feb. 1885. Although the article is unsigned, S. Israel's authorship is hardly in doubt. Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2003, p. 36, Report of the German Consul-General Bieber (Cape Town) to Bismarck, 11 Feb. 1885.
- 75 Cf. Vogelstang's instructive account of how the "protection treaty" with Joseph Frederik of Berthanie came about in ZKKK, Vol. 8, 1906, p. 47.
- 76 Jacobus Isaak of Berseba had concluded the "protection treaty" only to make sure that his son would succeed him (Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2149, pp. 7-9).
- 77 Cf. Isle, J., *Die Herero*, *op. cit.*, p. 209.
- 78 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1468, pp. 2-3. The expedition of the Rev. Dr. Büttner, Büttner to Kussrow, 20 Feb. 1885.
- 79 KJb. Vol. 2, 1889, p. 182.
- 80 Cf. Loth, Heinrich, *Die christliche Mission in Südwestafrika*, p. 106.
- 81 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2152, pp. 17-23, Büttner to Bismarck, 28 June 1885.
- 82 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2152, pp. 28-30, Büttner to Bismarck, 24 July 1885.
- 83 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2152, p. 32, Willem Christian to Büttner, 2 July 1885.
- 84 His commercial operations also fell short of his expectations, especially because the goods supplied by the Germans turned out to be of inferior quality. (Cf. Schinz, Hans, *op. cit.*, p. 503).
- 85 ZKKK, Vol. 11, 1909, p. 318.
- 86 As regards Bismarck's role in the founding of the Ger. SWA Co. cf. Schüssler, Wilhelm, *op. cit.*, p. 217, and Zimmermann, Alfred, *Geschichte der deutschen Kolonialpolitik*, Berlin, 1914, p. 81. Kussrow stated a few years later (in 1890): "As far as I can remember, official quarters were directly involved in the establishment of the Berlin company [the Ger. SWA Co. - H. D.] in order to rule out the possibility of Herr Lüderitz's property passing

- into British hands." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1547, pp. 27-42, Kusterow to Bismarck, 19 Jan. 1890.
- The circumstances surrounding the founding of the Deutsch-Asiatische Bank in 1889 were similar. Cf. Stoecker, Helmuth, *Deutschland und China im 19. Jahrhundert. Das Eindringen des deutschen Kapitalismus*, Berlin, 1958, pp. 190 ff. Cf. Review by H. Drechsler in *Deutsche Literaturzeitung*, Vol. 81, col. 427 ff.
- 87 The Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft für Südwestafrika (German South West Africa Company) should not be confused with the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft, a propaganda organization of monopoly capital.
- 88 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1524, pp. 105-6, Ger. SWA Co. to the Bundesrat (upper house of Parliament), 6 July 1885.
- 89 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1524, p. 107, Provincial Tax Director Hellwig to the Ger. SWA Co., 6 Jan. 1886.
- 90 Cf. e. g. Sander, Ludwig, *Geschichte der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft für Südwestafrika von ihrer Gründung bis zum Jahre 1910*, Vol. 1, Berlin, 1912, pp. 14 ff., and more recently, Hintrager, Oskar, *Südwestafrika in der deutschen Zeit*, Munich, 1955, p. 17. There are also some bourgeois authors who question the "patriotic motives" of the Ger. SWA Co. Cf. e. g. Jäckel, Herbert, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
- 91 Quoted from Dove, Karl, *Wirtschaftliche Landeskunde der deutschen Schutzgebiete*, Leipzig, 1902, p. 2.
- 92 The Imperial Commissioner, Heinrich Goering, was the father of the Nazi leader and was criminal Hermann Goering.
- 93 It is wrong, therefore, to write: "Within days of establishing their rule, the German colonizers instituted a bloody regime of terror against the subjugated African population." *Die Völker Afrikas*, Vol. 2, p. 668. There could be no question of this in the 1880s.
- 94 Cf. Sik, Endre, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 395. The reasons for occupying Bechuanaland were purely political rather than economic. The creation of a buffer state was to prevent South West Africa from merging with the Boer Republics. Moreover, the realization of Cecil Rhodes's Cape-to-Cairo dream was thus still possible.
- 95 A summary of the German-Portuguese border dispute is given in Imp. Col. Office File No. 1621, pp. 52-80. That Portugal was not prepared to put up with the situation emerges from a remark by Senhor Soveral, the Portuguese minister in London, who told the German minister, von Tattenbach, in November 1901 that as far as he knew the border on the Kunene River had not been settled definitively. Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 9022, p. 131.
- 96 KJb, Vol. 2, 1889, pp. 179 ff.
- 97 Cf. *Jahrbuch der deutschen Kolonialpolitik und des Exports*, p. 152. Another source says: "The German claims extend at least as far as 24° E. longitude." DKZ, NF, Vol. 2, 1889, p. 336. But in a more sober assessment one finds this statement: "The fact remains that, as yet, only a tiny part of it [South West Africa - H. D.] is really in our possession." KJb, Vol. 2, 1889, p. 182.
- 98 Cf. DKZ, NF, Vol. 3, 1890, pp. 170 ff.
- 99 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1534/1, pp. 5-6, State Commissioner Rommel to Bismarck, 30 March 1886.
- 100 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1542, p. 8.
- 101 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1542, pp. 3-4, Kayser's memorandum, 30 Sept. 1886.
- 102 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1534/1, pp. 14-23.
- 103 DKZ, NF, Vol. 2 1889, p. 30. These were the words of Friedrich Fabri.

- 104 *Ibid.*, NF, Vol. 1, 1888, p. 123.
- 105 *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, 1887, p. 533.
- 106 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, p. 33, Witbooi to Nels, 27 Sept. 1886.
- 107 DKZ, NF, Vol. 2, 1889, p. 44.
- 108 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, pp. 47-48, Goering to Bismarck, 21 June 1888.
- 109 The reference is to the Witboois, who are disparagingly described as a "band of robbers" or in similar terms in virtually all bourgeois publications dealing with South West Africa.
- 110 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, p. 27, Pechuel-Loesche (Jona) to the Ger. For. Off., 24 Oct. 1886.
- 111 Cf. e. g. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1538, p. 67, Hermann (an employee of the Ger. SWA Co.) to the Ger. SWA Co., 11 July 1888: "Feeling is running high among the missionaries . . . A premature German patriotism and the fact that a former missionary, Dr. Büttner, was sent here as a political agent, made them give up their previous attitude [of alleged political neutrality - H. D.], but now Germany is leaving them in the lurch. Is this good policy?"
- 112 Loth, Heinrich, 'Die Ketzerbewegung in Südwestafrika, ihre Vorgeschichte und ihre Grenzen im Freiheitskrieg 1904 bis 1906', in WZ Leipzig, Vol. 9, 1959-60, p. 405.
- 113 Cf. Sander, Ludwig, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 37.
- 114 The minutes of a meeting held by the supervisory council of the Ger. SWA Co. on 16 Dec. 1887 contain this passage: "The samples personally taken by Dr. Goering and forwarded to us by the Foreign Office have been examined by the Royal School of Mines," Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1534/1, pp. 40-3. Hopes of striking gold in South West Africa were high after the rich goldfields of the Witwatersrand had been discovered the year before.
- 115 Hintrager, Oskar, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
- 116 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1534/1, pp. 40-3.
- 117 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1522, pp. 68-71, Ger. SWA Co. to Bismarck, 21 March 1887.
- 118 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1522, p. 77, Ger. SWA Co. to Bismarck, 5 Sept. 1887.
- 119 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1523, pp. 6-19.
- 120 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1523, p. 35, Ger SWA Co. to Bismarck, 5 Dec. 1887.
- 121 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1534/1, pp. 48-9.
- 122 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2104, pp. 91-100, missionary Viehe to the Rev. Dr. Hahn, 20 Dec. 1888. It is not without interest, either, what Dr. Hammacher, a deputy in the German Reichstag, said about this matter. Hammacher, a leader of the National Liberal party and first vicechairman of the Supervisory Council of the Ger. SWA Co., had a personal stake in the maintenance of German "protection" over South West Africa. He stated: "I cannot see why a European state should enter into protection treaties with a ruler in Africa if they do not require the German state, too, to protect the interests of that ruler against outside enemies. However, the State Secretary has told the commission that the German Government does not feel the protection treaty concluded with Kama-herero places it under any obligation to protect the negotiating partner in the event of hostilities breaking out. I consider this a legally untenable position . . ." KJb, Vol. 4, 1891, p. 128.
- 123 *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, 1889, p. 183.
- 124 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2104, pp. 91-100, missionary Viehe to the Rev. Dr. Hahn, 20 Dec. 1888.
- 125 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2104, pp. 5-25, Goering to Bismarck, 15 Nov. 1888.

- 126 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2104, pp. 146-9, Bismarck to Goering, 6 March 1889. Incidentally, Goering was relieved of his post and made consul in Haiti.
- 127 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2104, pp. 113-24, Ger. SWA Co. to Bismarck, 19. Feb. 1889, and KJb, Vol. 4, 1891, p. 127.
- 128 The five Germans were: Dr. Goering, the Imperial Commissioner; Franken, a representative of the Ger. SWA Co.; von Quitzow, an officer serving with the "Protective Force"; and two missionaries, Diehl and Eich.
- 129 *Vossische Zeitung*, 10 Jan. 1889.
- 130 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2104, pp. 5-25, Goering to Bismarck, 15 Nov. 1888.
- 131 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2104, pp. 91-100, missionary Viehe to the Rev. Dr. Hahn, 15 Dec. 1888.
- 132 Ibid., missionary Viehe to the Rev. Dr. Hahn, 20 Dec. 1888.
- 133 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2104, pp. 155-64, missionary W. Eich to Inspector von Rohden, 3 Nov. 1888.
- 134 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2105, pp. 32-4, missionary H. Brincker to Bismarck, 13 March 1889. A few passages from this letter are given, though somewhat incorrectly, in François, Curt von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika. Geschichte der Kolonisation bis zum Ausbruch des Krieges mit Witbooi*, April 1893, Berlin, 1899, p. 45.
- 135 Thus was the collapse of the German "protectorate" over Hereroland described in contemporary German sources.
- 136 Imp. Col. Off. No. 2103, pp. 8-10, Ger. For. Off. memorandum, 13 Dec. 1888.
- 137 Imp. Col. Off. No. 2103, pp. 15-16, Ger. For. Off. memorandum, 15 Dec. 1888.
- 138 Ibid.
- 139 Cf. Hagen, Maximilian von, *Bismarcks Kolonialpolitik*, pp. 178 ff.
- 140 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2103, pp. 140-3, Treckow (Consul-General in Cape Town) to Bismarck, 31 Dec. 1888.
- 141 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2104, pp. 5-25, Goering to Bismarck, 15 Nov. 1888 (the despatch arrived in Berlin on 5 Feb. 1889).
- 142 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2104, pp. 150-3, Bismarck to Goering, 6 March 1889.
- 143 It wrote, *inter alia*: "He [Dr. Goering] would certainly not have attended the meeting, had he not been sure that he, representing Imperial authority, would be safe from the risk of a public defeat at the hands of R. Lewis and his associates. But he suffered just such a defeat." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2104, pp. 113-24, Ger. SWA Co. to Bismarck, 19 Feb. 1889.
- 144 Ibid. An abridged version of the petition is given in Sander, Ludwig, *Geschichte*, Vol. 1, pp. 52 ff.
- 145 Goering had formulated this idea once before, in June 1888: "And yet the Namaqua are the element that will be needed sooner or later to keep the Herero in check." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, pp. 47-8, Goering to Bismarck, 21 June 1888.
- 146 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2104, pp. 131-6, For. Off. memorandum for Bismarck, 4 March 1889.
- 147 It was not until 1891 that the Woermann-Linie, under the terms of a contract with the Ger. SWA Co., operated a steamship service to South West Africa three or four times a year, with Walvis Bay as the final destination up to 1894. From 1894 the port of call was Swakopmund, (Cf. Brackmann, Karl, *50 Jahre deutscher Afrikaschifffahrt*, Berlin, 1935, p. 58).
- 148 Ironically, the small German military force sent out to capture or expel Robert Lewis

- made the trip to South West Africa aboard a steamship of the Union Castle Line. The man who financed Lewis's operations was the same person who operated the Union Castle Line: Sir Donald Currie.
- 149 In order to mislead the British, von François received oral instructions from the Wilhelmstrasse "to intimate that we are contemplating the construction of a railway line leading inland from Angra Pequena." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2106, p. 67, handwritten note by Berchem on a Ger. For. Off. report to Nels, 19 May 1889.
 - 150 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2106, pp. 50-7, Ger. For. Off. instructions for Nels, 19 May 1889. Cf. also François, Curt von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
 - 151 *Ibid.*
 - 152 *Ibid.*
 - 153 *Ibid.*, p. 49.
 - 154 Near Tsaobis Capt. François erected the so-called Wilhelmsfeste, the first German fortress in South West Africa, which even the Germans invariably described as a "robber's den". (Cf. Bulow, F. J. von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika, Drei Jahre im Lande Hendrik Witboois*, Berlin, 1896, p. 79).
 - 155 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2108, pp. 33-4, private letter by Capt. François to Krauel, 29 Oct. 1889.
 - 156 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2107, pp. 10-11, Nels to Bismarck, 11 Aug. 1889.
 - 157 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2107, pp. 98-103, missionary Viehe to Warneck, 23 Aug. 1889.
 - 158 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2107, pp. 72-3, Samuel Maharero to François, 18 Aug. 1889. The text is given in François, Hugo von, *Name und Damara*, Magdeburg, 1895, p. 112.
 - 159 "I consider it a matter of urgent necessity to bring the force to a strength of 50 men, to equip it with the latest small-bore repeating rifles and to make available a cannon complete with 100 shells and 50 shrapnels because I do not believe that matters can be settled definitively in an amicable way." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2107, pp. 22-3, François to Bismarck, 6 Aug. 1889. It should be noted that, within six weeks of arriving in South West Africa, François demanded that his force be increased to 50 men. Indeed, in his book (François, Curt von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, p. 47), he said that as early as July he had called for reinforcements to bring the force to 30 men. Given these facts it was somewhat strange for the DKZ to maintain as late as November that "this dashing officer would rather risk his life than plead for help from the Government right at the outset of his new assignment in Hereroland." DKZ, NF, Vol. 2, 1889, p. 339.
 - 160 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2107, pp. 68-70, François to Bismarck, 20 Aug. 1889.
 - 161 Imp. Col. Off. File, No. 2108, pp. 33-4, François to Krauel, 29 Oct. 1889.
 - 162 François, Curt von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, p. 55. That François was taking a tough line with the Herero was confirmed by the missionary Meyer who wrote, among other things: "The troops are energetic, but somewhat too rigorous by local standards. The Herero word for this is *oukapike* - high-handedness . . . The captain is a man of rough-and-ready-methods". *Ibid.*, pp. 54 ff.
 - 163 *Ibid.*, p. 55.
 - 164 *Ibid.*, p. 56.
 - 165 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2107, pp. 40-4, missionary Redeker to missionary Bröcker, 17 Sept. 1889.
 - 166 Krauel noted in a memorandum that reports from the mission had shown "how clumsily Herr von Fr(ançois) had acted in O(tjimbingwe)." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2107, p. 97. Krauel's memorandum for Stemmich, 7 Nov. 1889.

- 167 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2107, pp. 108-12, Ger. For. Off. to François, 9 Nov. 1889. In his book François made the following comment on the instructions he had received from Berlin: "The fact that the Deputy Commissioner had been directed to conduct the negotiations with the natives alone had no bearing on my own instructions. It was irrelevant as long as the Commissioner and the Military Commander were equals. It was necessary to place one of them under the authority of the other. Indeed the best thing to do was to combine both functions in the hands of the Military Commander . . . because it was difficult for Berlin to judge the situation accurately and to direct affairs, given the inadequacy of communications. In practice, it proved impossible in most cases to conduct political negotiations that way, and I continued to have political dealings with the natives. At any rate, Berlin was exaggerating the importance of political negotiations. After all, political relations at that time were being sought for no other purpose than to ensure that the Commissioner, our troops and all Europeans were tolerated in the country. That was the gist of the matter." François, Curt von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, op. cit., pp. 57 ff.
- 168 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2105, pp. 78-80, draft instructions for Dr. Goering, Dec. 1889. Cf. also KJb, Vol. 3, 1890, pp. 160 ff.
- 169 François, Curt von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, op. cit., p. 58.
- 170 Cf. GP, Vol. 4, No. 946.
- 171 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1545, pp. 5-10, Ger. SWA Co. to Bismarck, 11 April 1889. The sales negotiations with F. J. Groll go virtually unmentioned in bourgeois publications. Even Ludwig Sander, the chronicler of the Ger. SWA Co., who had free access to the company files, devotes to the protracted negotiations which dragged on for three years no more than three perfunctory sentences of his otherwise rather voluminous work. (Cf. Sander, Ludwig, *Geschichte . . .*, op. cit., Vol. 1, pp. 57 ff.). The only exception among bourgeois authors is Jäckel, Herbert, op. cit., p. 55, who provides what is for the most part an accurate account of the sales talks between the Ger. SWA Co. and Groll, drawing upon an unpublished memorandum by the Hamburg lawyer Scharlach, which is apparently identical with Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1550, pp. 144-63. However, Jäckel is mistaken in assuming that the so-called Groll Syndicate was involved in the granting of the Damaraland concession in 1892.
- 172 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1550, p. 138, memorandum.
- 173 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1545, pp. 5-10, Ger. SWA Co. to Bismarck, 11 April 1889.
- 174 Cf. Hamburgischer Korrespondent, No. 300, 30 Oct. 1889: "A motion at the most recent meeting of the supervisory council [of the Ger. SWA Co. - H. D.] calling for a clear commitment not to distribute the proceeds, but to use them to develop the remaining property was rejected."
- 175 To give an example, Legation Counsellor Stemrich wrote in his expert opinion: "Even when one leaves out of account the credit which the company deserves for having purchased Lüderitz's acquisitions and saving Germany's first colonial venture, it remains the only German undertaking in South West Africa which has genuine importance because of its origins, members and general set-up. If this undertaking founders - and this will be inevitable if it cannot be sold within the next year or so - there will no longer be any German establishments worth mentioning in the Protectorate. The odds are that no German capital whatsoever will then be forthcoming for South West Africa so that the Protectorate will be lost once and for all." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1545, pp. 70-5, expert opinion of Legation Counsellor Stemrich, 26 Sept. 1889.
- 176 Dr. Goering's opinion was that "such a crash [i. e. the liquidation of the Ger. SWA Co. -

- H. D.] would hurt our colonial policy far more than the adverse criticism that would result if a valuable part of its private rights were turned over to a British company." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1545, pp. 76-82, expert opinion of Dr. Gotting, 3 Oct. 1889.
- 177 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1545, pp. 68-9, expert opinion of Dr. Kayser, 22 Sept. 1889.
- 178 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1545, pp. 70-5, expert opinion of Stemrich, 26 Sept. 1889.
- 179 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1546, pp. 8-13, Ger. For. Off. memorandum for Bismarck, 15 Oct. 1889.
- 180 Beginning in November 1889 there were attempts to bring a so-called German consortium for which some Germans living in England acted as front men into the sales negotiations instead of the Groll Syndicate. Although this operation was cleverly disguised, it soon became clear to the Ger. For. Off. that purely British interests were involved and that these, unlike the relatively harmless Groll group, were controlled by Cecil Rhodes.
- 181 Although the Supervisory Council of the Ger. SWA Co. had bound members to secrecy over the contract with the Groll Syndicate, details were leaked to the press by von Lilienthal, an opponent of the contract.
- 182 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1547, pp. 93-8 DKG, Cologne branch, to Bismarck, 4 Feb. 1890. The Ger. SWA Co. was infuriated by this resolution which put its sales project at risk. In a petition to Chancellor Bismarck it complained that the Cologne branch of the DKG had adopted the resolution "without first getting into touch with its own central executive or with us . . . The top bodies of the DKG - the Praesidium, the Board and the Committee, have not been involved in that agitation." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1547, pp. 107-20, Ger. SWA Co. to Bismarck, 13. Feb. 1890. It is important to note here that the Praesidium of the DKG was more or less identical with that of the Ger. SWA Co. So the middle-class colonial zealots in the provinces had turned against their "leaders" in Berlin, who were the representatives of big business interests.
- 183 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1547, pp. 55-66, expert opinion of Stemrich, 24 Jan. 1890.
- 184 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1547, p. 136, Ger. For. Off. to Ger. SWA Co., 25 Feb. 1890. It is not true, therefore, that the matter was "still pending in March 1890" as Jäckel maintains in *op. cit.*, p. 56.
- 185 Re Julius Scharlach (1842-1908) cf. *Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon*, Vol. 3, p. 260, and Scharlach, Julius, *Koloniale und politische Aufsätze und Reden*, edited by Poschinger, Berlin, 1903.
- 186 Hallgarten, G. W. F., in *Imperialismus vor 1914*, Vol. 1, Munich, 1951, pp. 347 ff., drew attention to the fact that "there are many threads running between the Nobel trust, which strictly speaking supports the Boers, and the rival group of Cecil Rhodes and Joe Chamberlain."
- 187 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1548, p. 143, Captivi to the Ger. SWA Co., 18 Feb. 1891.
- 188 Apart from Scharlach these were: the Hamburg shipowner, Adolf Woermann, who represented the interests of the Disconto-Gesellschaft and the Nobel trust; Karl Wichmann, also representing the Nobel trust; A. Philipp, Chairman of the Supervisory Council of Dynamit AG, previously Nobel & Co.; and J. N. Heidemann, General Manager of Köln-Rotweiler-Pulverfabriken.
- 189 The Colonial Department (Col. Dept.) had been formed on 1 April 1890, as a new (the fourth) department of the Ger. Foreign Office. It was headed by Dr. Paul Kayser from 1890 to 1896. In 1907 the Col. Dept was expanded to become the Imperial Colonial Office (Imp. Col. Off.).
- 190 The text is given in DKBl, Vol. 3, 1892, No. 18.

- 191 This fact had even to be confirmed in a judgement passed by the Imperial District Court in Windhoek on 16 Nov. 1911. Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1584, pp. 192-8.
- 192 Cf. *Kölnische Zeitung*, No. 1018, 22 Dec. 1892, and *Vossische Zeitung*, 14 Jan. 1893.
- 193 The SWAC paid Scharlach £ 90,000 (then equivalent to 1,800,000 Marks) for the Damara-land concession which had cost him nothing. So even at that stage it had all been a most lucrative affair for him.
- 194 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1586, pp. 27 ff. That the SWAC had openly passed into the hands of Rhodes's agents transpired after bitter divisions developed within the company's Board, resulting in the dismissal of the Chairman, Wilson, who then travelled to Berlin to tell the story to the Col. Dept.
- 195 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2152, pp. 52-3, Ger. For. Off. to Goering, 29 Dec. 1889.
- 196 Dr. Theophil Hahn was the real founder of the Kharaskhoma Syndicate. A resident of Stellenbosch, Cape Colony, he was thoroughly familiar with South West Africa, even speaking the language of the Nama. When Hahn learned about the alleged discovery of gold in SWA, he made a journey to London to raise funds for the establishment of a company to acquire land and mining concessions in Namaland. Hahn enlisted the cooperation of a number of British capitalists who then formed the KhS in March 1889. As had been the case with the Groll Syndicate, the people involved were middle-level businessmen interested in rewarding speculative transactions, but not pursuing any political objectives. H. C. W. Gibson was made head of the syndicate. As for Hahn, who was not a man of wealth, he was charged with fitting out an expedition to obtain the concessions required.
- 197 "The mining concession fees, fixed at £ 200 per annum, were paid to the chief for three years in advance to enable him to buy a sizeable amount of ammunition being stored here [i. e. in Warmbad - H. D.] for Mr. Krynauw from Cape Town. Willem Christian's desire to acquire this ammunition was one of the reasons why he granted the concession to the Kharaskhoma Syndicate." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1638, pp. 183-94, memorandum by C. Wandres on the KhS, 10 Dec. 1896.
- 198 "I insisted that the Veldschoendragers elect and install a chief forthwith." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1638, pp. 120-33, Hahn to the Ger. For. Off., 30 Nov. 1896.
- 199 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1637, pp. 176-92, Hahn to Wandres, 22 May 1896.
- 200 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1564, pp. 10-17, report by Nordenflycht to Caprivi, 9 Aug. 1892. The figures given in Jäckel, Herbert, *op. cit.*, p. 72, are incorrect.
- 201 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1638, pp. 183-94, memorandum by C. Wandres on the KhS, 10 Dec. 1896.
- 202 The missionary commented wryly: "It would have been more correct to say that Gibson and Hahn carried him off to be placed under German protection because His Majesty the Ruler of All Bondels had been administered such a heavy dose of schnapps that he was totally intoxicated." *Ibid.*
- 203 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1563, pp. 53-9, KhS memorandum, 21 May 1891.
- 204 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1564, pp. 10-17, Nordenflycht's report for Caprivi, 9 August 1892.
- 205 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1563, pp. 79-84, Nordenflycht's memorandum on the KhS, 25 Sept. 1891. One reason for the Col. Dept's delaying tactics was that it first wanted to afford the Groll Syndicate an opportunity to found a company in Britain.
- 206 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2108, pp. 136-7, Goering to Bismarck, 1 May 1890.
- 207 François, Curt von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

- 208 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2108, pp. 133-5, Lieutenant von François to Bismarck, 27 March 1890. Cf. François, Hugo von, *op. cit.*, pp. 122 ff.
- 209 François, Curt von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
- 210 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, p. 68, Nelsto Caprivi, 11 Nov. 1890. For details of Maharero's succession cf. Irle, J., *Die Herero*, *op. cit.*, pp. 216 ff., and Bülow, F. J. von, *op. cit.*, pp. 121 ff.
- 211 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 262-78.
- 212 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2109, pp. 7-21, Goerring to Caprivi, 15 Nov. 1890.
- 213 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2109, pp. 38-44, Caprivi's report to Wilhelm II about "The Situation in South West Africa in late 1890", 1 Dec. 1890. Caprivi added the following note: "After hearing today's report, His Majesty has decreed that the instructions given on 19 May 1889 shall not be altered."
- 214 Of special interest here is what François said with regard to the Col. Dept.: "The Colonial Department was anxious to retain and develop the South West African colony while the Imperial Chancellor and the Reichstag were reluctant to appropriate the funds needed, this being a matter of conviction in the former case and one of prudence in the latter. The upshot was that under Privy Counsellor Kayser, the official instructions forbade civil servants to take any energetic action against the natives whereas the oral and written interpretations given by the Colonial Department encouraged civil servants to act with more vigour." François, Curt von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
- 215 Cf. Yerusalimski, A. S., *Die Aussenpolitik und die Diplomatie des deutschen Imperialismus Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin, 1954, p. 64, and Hallgarten, G. W. F., *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 269 ff. As regards more recent publications about Caprivi, cf. Meisner, H. O., 'Der Reichskanzler Caprivi. Eine biographische Skizze', in *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, Vol. 111, 1955, pp. 669-752, and Nichols, John A., *Germany after Bismarck: The Caprivi Era (1890-1894)*, Cambridge, Mass., 1958. Cf. also Raschdau, Ludwig, *Unter Bismarck und Caprivi*, Berlin, 1939, pp. 184 and 238 ff., and Gothein, Georg, *Reichskanzler Graf Caprivi*, Munich, 1918, pp. 83 ff.
- 216 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1548, p. 72, Caprivi's note, 7 Sept. 1890.
- 217 Cf. Caprivi, *Die Reden des Grafen von Caprivi, 1883-1893*, edited by R. Arndt, Berlin, 1894, pp. 94 ff., and KJb, Vol. 4., 1891, p. 132.
- 218 KJb, Vol. 5, 1892, p. 130.
- 219 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1549, p. 30, Nordenflycht's note, 31 Aug. 1891.
- 220 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1534/1, pp. 152-9, Minutes of a meeting of the supervisory council of the Ger. SWA. Co., 2 March 1892.
- 221 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1534/1, pp. 177-80, Minutes of a meeting of the supervisory council of the Ger. SWA Co., 29 Sept. 1892.
- 222 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1564, pp. 54-9, private letter by Nordenflycht to Kayser, 7 Sept. 1892.
- 223 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1582, pp. 154-8, Nordenflycht to Caprivi about the concession requested by Messrs Dr. Scharlach and Wichmann, 2 Aug. 1892. Nordenflycht said, *inter alia*, "that given the current situation in the Protectorate it appears to be politically important to demonstrate that business circles have faith in the future development of the country." Cf. also the lengthy letter to Dr. Kayser in which Nordenflycht justified the granting of the Damaraland concession: Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1586, pp. 10-17, Nordenflycht to Kayser, 15 Nov. 1892.

- 224 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1550, pp. 17-18, Scharlach to Kayser, 8 Feb. 1892, and pp. 35-42, Cooper to Kayser, 9 Feb. 1892. Cooper, in his letter to Kayser, even suggested that Kayser should try to persuade Prince von Hohenlohe to join the Board of the British company to be established.
- 225 Capt. von François said on this matter: "War was less of a nuisance for them [the German settlers - H. D.] than peace between the two tribes. War tended to weaken the natives, made it easier to disarm them gradually, stimulated trade, afforded the Europeans a climate of security and provided unclaimed land for settlement." François, Curt von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, p. 152.
- 226 *Ibid.*, p. 71.
- 227 Cf. *Die Dagboek van Hendrik Witbooi, Kaptein van die Witbooi-Hottentotte, 1884 bis 1905* (hereafter referred to as *Die Dagboek*), with an introduction by Gustav Voigts, Cape Town, 1929, pp. 77 ff. A German translation of this letter is given in François, Hugo von, *op. cit.*, pp. 126 ff.
- 228 *Ibid.*, pp. 137 and 139. The files of the Imp. Col. Off. include an extensive report by Lieutenant von François about his journey to Hornkranz. The purpose of the journey was "to reconnoitre Hornkranz and Witbooi's armed forces." Significantly enough, this report, partly intended for publication in the DKBI, a mouthpiece of the government, carried a Col. Dept. note saying: "Nothing relating to the visit to Hornkranz may be published." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2109, pp. 108-31. Lieutenant von François's report on a trip made to Heusis, Hornkranz and Rehoboth from 5 to 19 March 1891, 31 March 1891.
- 229 François, Hugo von, *ibid.*, p. 139.
- 230 François, Curt von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, p. 153. François added: "The protection treaty I had already drawn up I kept in my pocket." *Ibid.*, p. 154. A summary of the conversation which took place between H. Witbooi and François on 9 June 1892 is found in *Die Dagboek*, pp. 130 ff.
- 231 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 100 ff.
- 232 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 146 ff., 166 ff. and 176 ff.

CHAPTER II

Land and Cattle (1893-1903)

The Raid on Hornkranz

The establishment of peace between the Herero and Nama in November 1892 was a landmark in the history of South West Africa, leading to a total realignment of forces. The result was that at the start of 1893 the German colonialists were facing a united front of Africans. The latter had become aware that the main battle lines were now running between the German imperialists and the united Africans. Although the German colonialists had let it be known that they favoured peace between the Nama and Herero, the signing of a peace treaty came as a severe blow to them. They realized that they could no longer play the game of the outsider biding his time.

A speech delivered by the Imperial Chancellor, Count Leo von Caprivi, at the Reichstag on 1 March 1893 indicates that the peace between the Herero and Nama and the resulting "distress calls" from Captain Curt von François provoked a change of mood on South West Africa in Berlin. After having been under intense pressure from colonial zealots of every description, the Imperial Chancellor finally joined the colonial camp, or at least ceased to resist demands from those quarters. He declared: "South West Africa is ours . . . This is not the moment for retrospection. How it all happened and whether it was a good thing or not is irrelevant now. It is ours, German territory, and it must remain so."¹ When word came that the Herero and Nama had made peace, Caprivi ordered the so-called protective force to be raised to a level of 250 men. Thus, the die had been cast in Berlin. It was now no longer just a question of retaining South West Africa, but of conquering it in earnest. At a time when German imperialism was about to enter the world arena, the powerlessness of the German colonialists had become an intolerable state of affairs. Even though Caprivi asserted that "our intention is not to wage war, but to become real masters of the country without bloodshed and to consolidate our rule",² it was only too apparent that the despatch of reinforcements was the signal for François to embark on "his" war against the Witboois.

On 16 March 1893, 214 men and two officers disembarked at Walvis Bay. Captain François, who had expected only 90 men, observed that the reinforcements were just what he needed to put his plans into effect. Although he hypocritically maintained that he would seek "a peaceful settlement, if possible",³ he asked for

two field guns plus ammunition. In order to lull Hendrik Witbooi into security, he told one of the latter's lieutenants that he would like to meet with the chief at a convenient time.⁴ But in reality he was determined to attack Hendrik Witbooi in Hornkranz.⁵ This was to be merely the beginning. Once the Witboois had been crushed he would go on to disarm the other Nama tribes, the Herero and the Rehobothers.⁶ Since it was clear that the Africans would not surrender their arms voluntarily, this could only mean war.

Less than a week after the reinforcements had arrived in Windhoek, Captain François ordered what was supposed to be a night march. Only the officers had been informed that the real purpose of the exercise was a raid on Hendrik Witbooi's camp. It was not until a day before the attack on Hornkranz that the other ranks were told about their real destination. The captain's orders were: "The object of this mission is to *destroy the tribe of the Witboois*."⁷ [My emphasis - H. D.]

In the small hours of 12 April 1893 the German soldiers reached Hornkranz which, as Captain François reported later, presented a picture of tranquillity. On François's orders, the troops opened fire on the place from three directions, spending 16,000 rounds of ammunition from 200 rifles within thirty minutes. Their commander was obviously pleased with the effect the surprise raid had on the Witboois who had been caught fast asleep. The accurate toll of casualties has never been established, at least as far as the men are concerned. Most writers agree that the number of armed Witbooi tribesmen killed in this savage attack was comparatively low, whereas the number of the women and children who died in the slaughter was 78.⁸ Karl Dove, an advocate of German imperialism, far from lamenting the death of these women and children, deplored the fact "that only a few men had been killed, among them no major figures and none of the headmen."⁹ As a final act of barbarity, the place was burnt down the following day. An eye-witness reported: "We stayed there for another day because the whole village was to be razed to the ground. All defences and the village wall were pulled down and the remaining huts were set ablaze. Hendrik had escaped, but his wife as well as 79 other women and children had fallen into our hands."¹⁰

François took several women and children captive, among them Witbooi's wife and daughter, who were marched off to Windhoek. He justified this move as follows: "I considered this an appropriate form of punishment."¹¹ But punishment for what? For having had the audacity to survive the attack? Hendrik Witbooi's daughter exclaimed proudly and defiantly: "Hasten back to the big ships in which you sailed hither, for my father will return soon to drive all white men from this land."¹²

Not only did the German troops inflict death and destruction upon Hornkranz, they also engaged in looting. Although most writers dismiss the booty as "pitiful",¹³ it was quite considerable all the same. The records that have come down to us contain a three-page list of captured objects comparable only to similar lists found in Nazi concentration camps. The motley collection comprised one harmonium, 212 pairs of stirrups, 74 horseshoes, 44 dentures, 12 coffee pots, 12 cast-iron coffee-

grinders and 3 wooden ones, 51 spoons, 38 forks, 48 pairs of scissors, 1 slate, 9 tin plates, 25 tin cups, 3 flat-irons, 3 violins, and 1 pair of opera glasses.¹⁶

Completely misjudging the situation, François believed that the Hornkranz raid had settled the issue already. In a despatch to the Colonial Department he wrote: "The success achieved at Hornkranz is so important that any further resistance on the part of Witbooi is out of the question."¹⁵ Lieutenant F. J. von Bülow took a somewhat more sober view of the outcome of the raid, observing that "the storming of Hornkranz cannot, however, be rated a success."¹⁶ And the chief of the Imperial Mining Authority, Duft, warned the officers not to count their chickens before they were hatched: "Your glee is quite unfounded, gentlemen. *This country has now ceased to be a safe place* because natives such as the Witboois cannot be kept in submission for long."¹⁷

The first report of the Hornkranz raid reached the Foreign Office in Berlin on 15 May 1893. It was a cable from the German Consul-General in Cape Town saying that Hornkranz had been "stormed" and adding: "Witbooi's losses 80 dead and 100 wounded." The "victory message" was immediately passed on to the German press for publication. Three days later a second cable arrived from Cape Town which read: "50 men and 30 women dead, Witboois have fled westward, incapable of any major military operation."¹⁸ Dr. Paul Kayser, Director of the Colonial Department, used this as a basis for the following report disseminated by Wolff's news agency: "According to a detailed account (*sic*) given by Capt. François, 50 men were killed and 100 wounded in the attack on Hornkranz. Witbooi, incapable of undertaking any major military operations, has fled westward."¹⁹

The officials responsible for this falsification in the Colonial Department had not reckoned with the British press which had already carried extensive reports about the German "exploits" in Hornkranz with special emphasis on the fact that nearly all of the victims had been women and children. As these reports were immediately taken up by a number of German papers, the official German version was thus subjected to an "undesirable revision".²⁰ August Bebel, the German Social Democratic leader, raised the matter in the Reichstag, calling on the Government to explain the brutal treatment meted out by the German soldiery at Hornkranz to women and children. In reply, Dr. Kayser resorted to downright falsehood, dishing up the freely invented story "that the Hottentots in Hornkranz took cover behind their womenfolk, which explains why so many of the latter were killed."²¹

Witbooi Takes the Initiative

Within hours of the "victors'" return to Windhoek where they were duly fêted, it was reported that Hendrik Witbooi, who had followed them unnoticed, had captured 40 or so of their horses near Aredareigas. Since the force thus found the number of their mounts reduced to 70, François immediately entered into negotia-

tions with a German merchant who had about 120 horses grazing in his paddock. They very soon reached agreement on the price, but when the horses were to be brought in from the pasture, it turned out that Witbooi had already taken possession of them as well. The Germans thus had 70 horses compared with Hendrik Witbooi's 300. So the first result of the Hornkranz raid was that the bulk of the German cavalry had been dismounted.

Thereafter, the initiative shifted to Witbooi. Captain François remained in Windhoek, waiting for the arrival of artillery that he hoped would prove decisive, meanwhile calling for further reinforcements. More than ever before, German might was exclusively confined to Windhoek. Whereas before the attack on Hornkranz German traders had been able to move freely about in the whole of South West Africa, after the raid all German trading activity came to a standstill. Duft's prophecy had thus been entirely fulfilled. The following episode will illustrate the situation in South West Africa after the Hornkranz raid. When a German cattle trader wanted to drive 500 oxen across Witbooi's territory, he turned to the latter for protection. The trader wrote: "Witbooi knew full well that we were Germans with whom he was at war and that he might have captured the 500 oxen without a shot being fired, but we, for our part, knew just as well that Hendrik would keep his word whatever happened, and we were not disappointed."²²

In late June 1893 about 200 Witboois suddenly showed up outside Windhoek. As the Germans had no horses to pursue them, they were forced to look on in frustration as the Witboois rode away, cheerfully waving their hats. Even the arrival of 100 reinforcements did not produce any change in the situation.

The British were none too happy with the outbreak of war in South West Africa as they feared the fighting might spread to the territory of Cape Colony. After the German and British colonialists had come to an understanding in the Anglo-German treaty of 1890, they continued to cooperate whenever it was a question of subduing the Africans. In mid-August 1893 the British Colonial Office issued a directive to the Cape Colony government, ordering it "to institute measures designed to prevent Witbooi from using British territory as a base for hostilities against the Protectorate." Moreover, it suggested the Cape Cabinet "consider the possibility of inducing Witbooi to withdraw definitively into a portion of the area under the control of Cape Colony."²³ This proposal, designed to help the German colonialists "win" the war by default, was angrily rejected by Berlin for reasons of "prestige": "We are astonished to hear that the Cape Government has been instructed to establish contact with the robber Witbooi and to afford him protection. Lord Rosebery should be urgently requested to call on the Cape Government to refrain from any form of interference."²⁴ Totally surprised by the German attitude, the English thereupon dropped their proposal.²⁵

At the end of August Witbooi pulled off a great coup. Near Horebis he attacked and wiped out a convoy of 20-odd ox wagons transporting freight inland. This exploit resulted in the interruption of the so-called Bay Route (linking Walvis Bay and Windhoek)²⁶ leaving Windhoek facing serious difficulties of supply.

Hendrik Witbooi, the man who was successfully waging war against a major European power, attracted support from many sides. Warriors from other Nama tribes joined him to avenge the dastardly attack on Hornkranz. Lieutenant F. J. von Bülow noted that, while Witbooi had commanded about 250 men with 100 rifles and 120 horses at the time of the Hornkranz raid, he had 600 men with 400 rifles and 300 horses at his disposal only six months later.²⁷

In early November 1893 Hendrik Witbooi attacked the experimental farm of the German South West Africa Company at Kubub, seizing 2,350 Merino sheep, 125 oxen and 28 horses. The experimental farm, which suffered damage valued at 80,000 Marks, had been founded by one E. Hermann in 1891-92 on behalf of the company. When Witbooi had first learned about the matter he had sent Hermann a letter demanding the abandonment of the scheme as he would withhold his consent. Disregarding these objections, Hermann and the German South West Africa Company requested military protection for the farm, which was refused, however, by François—the most recent occasion being on 10 October 1893—on the grounds that Witbooi was posing no threat to Kubub. After the raid on Kubub, therefore, François was upbraided by the Colonial Department for his miscalculation.²⁸

Indeed, the demands for François's recall grew more and more insistent towards the end of 1893. This was not because he had deliberately provoked a war against the Witboois with his raid on Hornkranz, but because he appeared incapable of winning the war. The *Vossische Zeitung* wrote: "If Major François cannot accomplish this [i.e. bring the war to a victorious conclusion—H. D.], he should be dismissed."²⁹ With trading activity virtually paralyzed, the business community in South West Africa now turned against their erstwhile hero: "In certain quarters the war is dubbed François's private war."³⁰ The most acerbic critic of all was E. Hermann, the head of the German South West Africa Company's experimental farm, who had been driven away from Kubub. In a report to his company he made the following comparison between François and his predecessor Dr. Heinrich Goering: "Dr. Goering's tenure, while characterized by inaction, was a golden age for South West Africa. At least this was a benevolent man who was not so foolish as to take unnecessary risks . . . Major François has made a mess of his job. If he is not replaced by another military man shortly, the whole country may go up in flames within a matter of months."³¹ Ultimately, the criticism levelled at François also had repercussions in the Reichstag, where Prince Arenberg declared that "Major François is not the right man in the right place and must be replaced by someone else . . . Witbooi is the real master of the country, and François is no match for him."³²

But François remained convinced of his qualities as a military leader. In November 1893 he was still bombarding the Imperial Chancellor with over-optimistic reports, which were based, however, on wishful thinking rather than on hard facts. One of them said: "Summing up the war situation, it is safe to say that due

to the numerous blows he has received, notably at Hornkranz, Witbooi is now so desperately short of ammunition and men that there is no point in paying him much attention any longer."³³

Since François was satisfied that he had, to all intents and purposes, won the war against Witbooi and had ceased to "pay him much attention", he had already begun to turn his mind towards the other Nama tribes, as well as the Rehobothers and the Herero. That he was incapable of a realistic appraisal of the situation in South Africa can be seen from a message to the Chancellor in which he wrote about the continuation of the war: "At the beginning of January I will set out on a journey to Namaland with part of the garrison force in order to conclude treaties with the Simon Kopper and Khauas Hottentots, to assign reserves to them and to settle the affair concerning the Tseib and Veldschoendrager tribe. I believe this will cause no more difficulty than the projected settlement of the territorial claims put forward by the Bastards and the Red Nation. Subsequently, I shall call on the Supreme Chief of the Herero, Samuel Maharero, at Okahandja to define the boundaries of his territory. Whether I can secure Samuel's approval is, however, most doubtful . . . A carefully prepared attack [on the Herero-H. D.] would be sufficient to bring them all to heel. If the intention is to expel the Herero, which I would deplore as being contrary to the interests of the Protectorate, it would be necessary to despatch two officers, 100 men and a rapid-fire gun so as to bring pressure to bear from two points."³⁴

After this excursion into the realm of fantasy, it is time to take leave of Curt von François, the would-be strategist, whose days in South West Africa were numbered from the moment he proved unable to safeguard the interests of the German South West Africa Company. Towards the end of 1893 the Chancellor of the Reich sent Major Theodor Leutwein to the territory to obtain a clear picture of the situation there. It was not long before Leutwein took François's place.

That Rhenish missionaries were directly supporting the struggle of the German military against the Nama emerges from a letter of thanks which the Colonial Department sent to the Mission's headquarters in Barmen. The letter reads in part: "From the reports that reached me about the unrest in the southern part of the South West African Protectorate I have gathered with deep satisfaction that the missionaries of the Society have rendered us valuable services in informing the Imperial authorities and the businessmen and purchasing companies directly involved sufficiently early about the movements of the rebellious Witboois and in proffering welcome advice on the treatment of the Nama chiefs who have remained loyal to us. The information received from the missionaries Fenchel, Wandres and Heinrichs has proved especially useful . . . I should like to use this opportunity to place on record my gratitude to the Society for the benevolent work it has conducted in the Protectorate and for the support which the missionaries have, under the present difficult circumstances, continued to extend to the Imperial Government."³⁵

Theodor Leutwein, the third of the Reich's supreme officials in South West

Africa, differed from his predecessors by the methods he employed. Where François's predecessor, Heinrich Goering (1885-90), had sought to maintain the fiction of a German colony by his mere presence and, for want of military might, had used diplomatic means to overcome African resistance to his presence, Curt von François (1889-94) had dispensed with diplomacy from the first, immediately taking up the sword. As for Leutwein, he tried to combine the two methods. Without renouncing the use of force, he showed a preference for diplomatic dealings. He was a past master of the policy of divide and rule which he readily admitted he had learned from the British. He played the various indigenous communities off against each other, thereby ensuring that the numerous risings against German colonial rule that were to take place between 1894 and 1903 remained sporadic and uncoordinated. His success seemed to confirm that this was the best possible approach for German imperialism, but only until such time as the Africans began to see through his manoeuvres. In 1904, when the "Leutwein system" collapsed, it became clear that he, too, had been unable to stifle the desire of the African population for independence.

The Subjugation of the Khauas and Franzmanns

When Leutwein arrived in South West Africa in early 1894, he decided to begin his tenure on a spectacular note. Since he was aware that Hendrik Witbooi was too tough a nut to crack, he turned against the small tribe of the Khauas who had not yet entered into a treaty with the German Empire.³⁶ With 100 men and a cannon Leutwein pounced on the camp of the Khauas. He captured Andreas Lambert, their chief, only to open "negotiations" with him a few hours later. Leutwein presented Lambert with a long list of demands, including recognition of German suzerainty and the surrender of weapons and ammunition. Faced with massive German pressure, the Khauas found that their only chance lay in flight. But Leutwein, realizing what they were up to, ordered their chief, whom he had released in the meantime, to be taken prisoner again and had their horses and weapons taken away from them. The Germans' superiority was so overwhelming that resistance was entirely out of the question. With 30 rifles and 30 horses captured, it seems that the number of men bearing arms cannot have been much greater.

The following day Leutwein set up a "court-martial" with himself as president which, after summary proceedings, sentenced Chief Andreas to death "for the crimes he had committed". "In the interests of the state" he ordered the sentence to be carried out at once. Then the "negotiations" were resumed, though only with what remained of the Khauas tribe, most of them "having fled after the capture of their chief out of a fear which was completely unfounded". Leutwein was careful not to mention the number of his "negotiating partners", which must have been very small indeed. He appointed one of the Khauas to serve as interim chief, after which the text of a treaty was read out whereby the Khauas recognized the

suzerainty of the German Emperor. The treaty was then approved by the "assembly".

Leutwein was quite aware, however, "that formal consent to the matter in question is without practical value. The tribe of the Khauas Hottentots have not submitted to the suzerainty of His Majesty the Emperor of their own free will, but have yielded only to the force of arms. A kaptein refusing to recognize this fact would violate the victor's right, making it a point of honour for the latter to force him to do so by a new campaign."

Not only did Leutwein subjugate the Khauas, he robbed them into the bargain. In his own words: "As for the horses that had been taken away, I did not return them to the tribe, but offered money instead as one way of making the tribe defenceless. The chief was instructed to come personally to Windhoek to collect the money. I promised to give him back their rifles and ammunition or a sum equivalent to their value provided good behaviour was shown for a prolonged period."³⁷

After this "exploit", Leutwein's next destination was Gokhas, the headquarters of Simon Kopper, chief of the Franzmann community. Apart from the Witboois, this was the last Nama tribe that had not yet concluded a so-called treaty of protection with the German Empire. As this was a relatively large tribe, Leutwein found it impossible to treat Simon Kopper in the same way as Andreas Lambert. But he had nevertheless made it abundantly plain that he would "serve an ultimatum on him and demand submission or emigration." The negotiations lasted a full three days. Leutwein reported: "It was not before I delivered an ultimatum to him [Simon Kopper-H. D.] and ordered the troops to take up position that the kaptein and the council of elders made up their mind to sign the treaty."³⁸ But even after the signing the kaptein asked: "How long will this treaty remain in force?"³⁹

In a report to the Imperial Chancellor Leutwein pointed out that, in his treaties with both the Khauas and the Franzmann tribes, he had avoided the term "protectorate", using the word "suzerainty" instead. "Therefore, these accords are of a different nature from the treaties concluded by the other tribes in the Protectorate of their own free will at a time when Germany was not yet prepared to resort to armed force."⁴⁰

After Leutwein had forced the Khauas and the Franzmanns to acquiesce in a treaty with the German Reich, he had South West Africa covered by a network of small military posts which he deemed essential for the actual subjugation of the country. To man the newly established posts, he asked for 250 reinforcements. Ever since the Hornkranz raid such requests had been the last resort of the military. Leutwein, who had meanwhile been appointed interim Governor of South West Africa, also took over command of the garrison force while Captain François went home "on leave", never to return. Now it was Leutwein's task to see through to a conclusion the struggle against Hendrik Witbooi which had severely undermined the German position in South West Africa.

Leutwein and Witbooi Come to Terms

In early May 1894 the Governor went to the Noukloof Mountains where Hendrik Witbooi had entrenched himself. As long as the requested 250 reinforcements had not arrived, Leutwein considered the renewed outbreak of fighting too much of a risk. Stalling for time, he signed a truce with Hendrik Witbooi, due to last until 1 August by which time, he hoped, the reinforcements would have been moved up to the Noukloof Mountains. On 27 August, after the arrival of the reinforcements, Leutwein engaged the Witboois in a decisive battle. But there was such stiff resistance that the Germans suffered heavy casualties, 100 men and 4 officers having to be called in as replacements. The unequal struggle, in which the German side also used artillery, dragged on until 9 September.⁴¹ In the end, the Germans' superiority in weaponry left the Witboois with no choice but to surrender.

Word of the outcome first reached the German Foreign Office in mid-October. Leutwein sent a cable saying that Witbooi had "submitted unconditionally to German protection".⁴² This was some way from the truth. While Hendrik Witbooi had capitulated, he had not done so unconditionally.⁴³

The "treaty of protection and friendship" concluded between Leutwein and Witbooi on 15 September 1894 bore a greater resemblance to the treaties signed "voluntarily" in 1884-85 than to the just-concluded treaties with the Khauas and Franzmanns in which Leutwein had substituted the term "suzerainty" for "protection".⁴⁴ This is underlined by Section 6 of the treaty which reads as follows: "Being certain that kaptein Hendrik Witbooi will faithfully keep the promise he has given, Major Leutwein leaves him in possession of all his weapons and ammunition. The kaptein guarantees that his people will not use them for the wrong purpose. Major Leutwein feels that the (nine) German rifles and carbines seized by the kaptein during the war should be handed back, although he does not insist on their immediate restitution, but will await their voluntary return. As soon as this occurs, the kaptein will receive compensation in the form of other rifles or food if he so wishes. The kaptein promises to keep this matter in mind."⁴⁵

The treaty represented anything but an unconditional surrender. It was clearly a compromise, the only way for the Germans to bring their 18 month old war against Hendrik Witbooi to an end. As it was, only the missionaries congratulated Leutwein on the conclusion of the treaty. The missionary G. Viehe wrote to the Governor that he was "delighted to hear that the enemy had been completely crushed", which would inevitably strengthen among the Africans "their badly needed faith in the power and goodwill of the Government".⁴⁶

In marked contrast, the German settlers in South West Africa and chauvinistic circles in Germany attacked the treaty in scathing terms. Leading the opposition in South West Africa was one Herr Weiss, agent of a land company, who virtually pulled the treaty to pieces.⁴⁷

In Germany, the faction opposed to the treaty was led by Curt von François, meanwhile promoted to the rank of major, who set out in great detail how the

war in South West Africa ought to have been conducted and on what terms a treaty with Hendrik Witbooi should have been concluded. What he "forgot" to say was why he himself had failed in a year and a half to bring the war to a close. In a lengthy report to the Imperial Naval Office, calculated to defend his own conduct of the war and to discredit Leutwein, he said, among other things: "Seen from this angle, the heavy losses suffered by the force in comparison with the probably insignificant losses sustained by the Witboois in the fighting from 27 August to 9 September are all the more disquieting as they occurred at the very end of the war. Unavoidably, the Witboois and all other Hottentot tribes will assert that they in the end gained the upper hand over the Germans, an argument supported by the favourable peace terms accorded to the Witboois. I am afraid this will soon find its expression in the attitude the Hottentots will adopt towards the whites

"Compared with the damage Witbooi has caused, I regard the terms on which Witbooi has been granted peace as far too mild. The war against Witbooi has cost the German Empire approximately four million Marks. The damage it has caused in the colony is at least as great. But he appears to have lost only areas that are at a great distance from Gibeon; his tribe remains united; he retains his weapons and, it seems, the captured rifles as well; and he receives a salary of 2,000 Marks.

"The situation that the peace has created cannot remain for long. It is absolutely essential for the safety of the settlers in the Protectorate that the natives be disarmed. The Witbooi tribe must be the first to be disarmed. Failing that, the war against it would have been pointless. If, as Burgsdorff reported, Witbooi shows up in the camp of our force with 30 mounted tribesmen armed to the teeth, this is something that did not occur before the war . . . Consequently, I deem it an urgent necessity to induce Witbooi to turn over his rifles. It would also be desirable to partition his tribe. Only by satisfying these conditions will the Witboois furnish proof that they are sincere about peace and submission."⁴⁸

Chauvinistic tirades like these did not fail to produce some effect on the German Foreign Office. Indeed, State Secretary Baron Marschall recommended in mid-November that the Kaiser "first await further developments before taking a decision and abstain from formally approving the treaty which is objectionable in several respects."⁴⁹

As a result, Governor Leutwein found himself compelled to disclose the motives for the conclusion of the treaty in an extensive report to the Imperial Chancellor. The report shows conclusively that the treaty was the maximum he could achieve. There was no other way for him to bring the war to an end. Leutwein wrote:

"All my detractors operate on the premise that I was free to treat Witbooi as I wished and that I acted the way I did for reasons that are impossible to understand. I must submit, Your Grace, that this was not so. In all colonial wars in which one faces a really formidable enemy, it is a question of either destroying him or coming to an understanding with him. As we have seen on more than one

occasion, victory alone is of no avail and severe punishment will only produce a secret enemy intent on casting off his shackles. This is a lesson I have drawn from the study of English colonial history from which we Germans can learn much more than that . . . As I indicated in my cable and in my report dated 26 October 1894, Witbooi did not offer to surrender unconditionally, but only to accept the German Emperor. Of course, capitulation would have been more desirable in political terms, and I would not have hesitated to administer the sternest treatment to Witbooi—not because I feel he would have deserved it, but on political grounds. The choice before me, however, was merely whether to accept Witbooi's submission or to pursue his destruction. A war that would have dragged on for months or years would undoubtedly have achieved that object, but the material and human cost and the implications for the Protectorate would have been incalculable.

Faced with this agonizing choice and deprived of the possibility of asking for superior orders, I chose not to run the risk of demanding further heavy sacrifices from the Fatherland after the opportunity to conclude an honourable peace had come.

The fact that Witbooi had been driven into the mountains on 4 September, while making it impossible for him to break out with his entire force, would not have prevented himself and the majority of his warriors from escaping all the same by slipping through our undermanned cordons at night. To seal off the area hermetically I would have needed 3,000 instead of 300 rifles. If, however, Witbooi managed to flee, everything else that had been achieved would have been in jeopardy. So I found myself in the situation of a doctor who—pardon me for making this comparison—had expelled a tapeworm without removing its head so that it continued to grow. In the eyes of the natives and of our detractors abroad, Witbooi would once again have been the real winner. The war had lasted long enough, leaving *me* with little freedom of action in prolonging it further. If it had come to that, my critics in the press who now have nothing but harsh words for me would have been equally unanimous in declaring that the Major should have predicted that and acted accordingly. In the light of these circumstances I gave up what seemed desirable in favour of what was attainable . . . Should Your Grace find it possible to agree with my assessment of the situation, I beg you to secure His Majesty's consent to the treaty concluded with Witbooi. The fact that it has so far been withheld is being exploited here and may well be detrimental to the interests of the Protectorate. If Your Grace does not subscribe to my view, nothing has been lost, either. In that event, all that would be needed would be the annulment of the treaty I have concluded and the despatch of the draft of a new one. This would, at least, create a clear situation. I should have no difficulty in finding a pretext that would put Kaptein Witbooi in the wrong. If a military conflict were to develop, our political and military situation would by no means be worse than it was in the Noukloof Mountains in September 1894. . . ."⁵⁰

Faced with this virtual declaration of bankruptcy, the Emperor finally gave his assent to the treaty on 15 November 1895.⁵¹

In sum, it can be said of the treaty signed between Leutwein and Witbooi on 15 September 1894 that its relatively conciliatory terms were not dictated by humanitarian considerations on the part of Leutwein, let alone by sympathy for the Africans, but by the sheer impossibility of bringing Hendrik Witbooi to heel by force of arms. Moreover, in conceiving the treaty, Leutwein was taking the long view. He knew full well that the war against Hendrik Witbooi would only be the first in a long series of wars between German imperialism and the people of South West Africa. Conversant as he was with British colonial history, he considered it the best and simplest method for the imperialists to play the indigenous peoples off against one another in future wars, using the time-honoured recipe of divide and rule. In his long-term plans to subjugate the Africans, Leutwein had in mind for the Witboois the role of a German mercenary force since they were a tribe known for their military prowess.

The war had left the Witboois impoverished, a fact that suited Leutwein's intentions very well. To bind them more closely to himself, he decided to lend them 200 cows for a period of three years. The exact terms for their return were set down in a contract. Lieutenant Burgsdorff, chief administrator of the newly established district of Gibeon, who was quite undeservedly suspected of sympathy for the Africans by pro-colonialist quarters, raised objections to the projected loan: "Sir, I believe the amount envisaged is too high. The improvement would come too rapidly . . . It must be brought home to them that they are poor, that the war has ruined them and that we are their only hope of survival . . . Also I believe that with a view to the future settling of whites in the country it would be a disadvantage if the Hottentots were too wealthy."⁵² Thereupon Leutwein reduced the number of cows to 150.⁵³

As well as making the Africans economically dependent, Leutwein deliberately fomented tribal strife between the Nama and the Herero because his next objective was—in the language of the German imperialists—the "settlement of the Herero question". Before taking on the Herero Leutwein wanted to make sure the Witboois were on his side.

In November 1895 he succeeded in persuading the Witboois to take a step that was to have disastrous consequences for the people of South West Africa. The Witboois agreed to "respond unconditionally and instantaneously, with all men capable of bearing arms, to any call from the Governor appointed by His Majesty the German Emperor to resist external and internal enemies of the German protectorate."⁵⁴ Leutwein had thereby managed to open what was to be the decisive breach in the African front, with the result that right up to the great Herero uprising in 1904 the Witboois remained on the German side. It was only ten years later that Hendrik Witbooi saw through Leutwein's perfidious schemes and realized that his unnatural alliance with the Germans had been a disastrous mistake which he then tried to make good with the Nama rebellions against German imperialism.

Nevertheless, the relationship between the Germans and the Witboois remained

a very tense one. When Witbooi was asked in mid-1895 to accompany Lieutenant Henning von Burgsdorff on a visit to Windhoek he stoutly refused for fear of being murdered there.⁵⁵ Leutwein's treatment of Andreas Lambert had made the Africans extremely suspicious. Witbooi turned a deaf ear to Burgsdorff's blandishments, even feigning illness to avoid accompanying him. He then profited from the district chief's absence to make a visit to British territory. From there he addressed a letter to the *Diamonds Fields Advertiser*, a newspaper appearing in Kimberley, thanking the editors for having drawn the world's attention to the appalling acts of cruelty the Germans had committed during their raid on Hornkranz.⁵⁶

Leutwein and Burgsdorff were infuriated by this letter, which threatened to wreck their plans regarding the Witboois. In a private message described as "confidential", Burgsdorff wrote to the Governor: "We are now entering the final stage that will settle the question of whether Witbooi really is an asset to us or whether he will have to disappear. If the latter should be necessary, I will take any step required to achieve this and, without a moment's hesitation, dispose of Witbooi, there being opportunities aplenty."⁵⁷ And Leutwein, although at pains to play down the incident because of his plans for the Witboois, concluded a letter to the Imperial Chancellor on a note of warning: "If the investigations now under way were to furnish belated evidence that the letter was not so insignificant, after all, . . . Your Grace may rest assured that I will institute appropriate counter-measures that will, at the most, involve a risk to the life of the kaptein. We cannot run the risk of a second Hornkranz. What is required, above all, is patience so that we can strike at the right moment."⁵⁸

In the end, Leutwein decided to bury the whole matter, which he summed up once again in a private message: "Witbooi's letter to the English paper . . . should be seen merely as an *expression of his fears*. Major François has left me a bad legacy with which I will remain saddled for a long time to come. However ruthless one's colonial policy, it is necessary to give one's actions a *semblance* of legality. François and his brother, convinced they could win easy laurels, opened hostilities without much consideration. The letter remains an embarrassment as it is grist to the mill of our enemies. Therefore, I will not forgive Witbooi so easily lest he commit similar acts of folly again."⁵⁹

As a precaution, Leutwein had Hendrik Witbooi placed under closer surveillance. Burgsdorff managed to hire one of the kaptein's principal advisers as a spy to keep him informed of each and every move.⁶⁰ It was from this spy that the Germans learned that Hendrik Witbooi had turned down a request that they and the Herero should fight the Germans together. Burgsdorff reported: "Emissaries of Nikodemus have come from Rietfontein (according to secret information from Jonas), not just to sound Witbooi out, but to ask him to join them in a rebellion. Witbooi gave them the cold shoulder, flatly refusing to discuss the matter at all. The Herero inquired repeatedly whether it was really true that Samuel Isaak and Daniel Pitter had become German through and through."⁶¹

In September 1894—about the time Leutwein made his deal with Hendrik Witbooi—disturbances were reported in the area of the Khauas whose kaptein Leutwein had ordered to be shot a few months previously. Sergeant Bohr, commander of the military post at Aais, made it his task to arrest Cornet Henrik of the Khauas for alleged anti-German sentiments. When on 13 September 1894 a group of Khauas, including the cornet, visited the post unarmed, he carried out his plan. When Henrik offered resistance, he and two of the men accompanying him were shot by the German soldiers.⁶² With good reason, the Khauas interpreted this as a declaration of war, proceeding to capture the horses of the German garrison as well as the cattle of a German settler near the military post. Thereupon Leutwein entered the scene with 100 troops and two guns. However, no hostilities developed as Hendrik Witbooi appeared on the German side for the first time. The Khauas were condemned to hand back the cattle they had seized. In addition, they were driven out of their homes, and their land was confiscated. The tribe was to be forcibly resettled in Witbooi territory with Witbooi as their supreme master.⁶³

Leutwein himself gave conflicting accounts of the murder of the three Khauas which had sparked off the renewed conflict with that tribe. In his book he dismissed the episode in one sentence: "The garrison of the newly founded military post of Aais had clashed with the Khauas Hottentots, an incident in which three Hottentots were killed while the post lost its entire cattle herd."⁶⁴ In a report to the Imperial Chancellor, however, Leutwein gave a truthful description of what had happened: "I should like to mention on this occasion that the German press, in depicting the cattle theft at Aais with great indignation, fails to mention that it was the result of the shooting of three Hottentots who had visited the post unarmed and with peaceful intentions. The tribe was thus satisfied that we had opened hostilities, the seizure of cattle being a legitimate form of waging war among the Hottentots. What these most uncivilized of all Hottentots have not yet begun to comprehend is that submission to German protection rules out war between us and that if such incidents occur they should lodge a complaint in Windhoek."⁶⁵

Within months of the confiscation of all Khauas territory, Governor Leutwein informed the Chancellor that the Khauas appeared to be in a state of gradual dissolution. He added that he would not consider it a disaster "if the tribe were to disappear altogether."⁶⁶

Leutwein Intervenes with the Bondelswarts

Shortly afterwards, Leutwein intervened in the affairs of the Bondelswarts because Chief Willem Christian, whom the Governor described as "the best friend we had in the south of the Protectorate at that time", was encountering growing opposition among the members of his tribe. The kaptein of the Bondelswarts, it will be recalled, had allowed himself to be bribed by the Kharaskhoma Syndicate, a British company, selling them virtually the entire land of his tribe. When they

saw the syndicate take possession of one portion after another of their best land, the Bondelswarts rebelled against their leader. Willem Christian was on the point of being deposed when Leutwein came to his aid. The Governor later told the Imperial Chancellor that the kaptein was "greatly relieved" by his timely arrival.

Leutwein restricted himself to advising the Kharaskhoma Syndicate to take over the land by stages. To intimidate the Bondelswarts, he made a great show of his support for the kaptein and demonstrated the functioning of a gun. Even though Mr. Gibson, the chief of the Kharaskhoma Syndicate, declared that in the event of open cooperation between the German Government and the British company the Bondelswarts would give in and cause no further difficulties,⁶⁷ Leutwein was keenly aware "that it will be no mean task to make the natives cede their land, no matter what further concessions the kapteins may be prepared to make. They simply lack the power to carry out the pledges they have made, losing the support of their people and facing acts of disobedience."⁶⁸

In another report to the Chancellor, Leutwein said that he deemed it impossible to enforce the territorial claims of the Kharaskhoma Syndicate towards the Bondelswarts "without a campaign of annihilation". He wrote: "It is inconceivable that the latter [the Bondelswarts-H. D.] should allow someone to take 128 farms away from them without putting up a fight, and if they were to let it happen in the case of the first 128 farms, then certainly not in the case of the second 128." In Leutwein's eyes, there were only two possibilities: "Either Kaptein Willem Christian repudiates all his commitments and, to save his chieftainship, assumes the leadership of the rebellion and embarks on open war, or his subjects will dissociate themselves from him and begin a guerrilla war that will be far more dangerous."

The Governor sounded a clear note of warning against war with the Bondelswarts: "The country is so deficient in water and pasture land that a force of 100 men would pose an almost insoluble supply problem. We would be defeated not by the people, but by Nature, to say nothing of the fact that our headquarters at Windhoek are a long way off. . . . Paradoxically, all future wars against the Hottentots will be more difficult and have even direr consequences than the one against Witbooi."⁶⁹

To forestall disturbances among the Bondelswarts, Leutwein advised the British company to proceed slowly and with circumspection in handling the territorial issue. Granting the request of the Kharaskhoma Syndicate that the text of the land cession contract remain unpublished for the time being, Leutwein said: "I consider this a legitimate request because by the time the syndicate has selected the 512 farms of 10,000 Cape acres apiece to which it is entitled in 15 years from now, there will not be much left for the natives. If they learn about this now, revolution is inevitable, but if they are familiarized with it *by and by* it will be possible to satisfy them."⁷⁰

After his carrot-and-stick policy had helped him to subject Namaland in 1894-1895, Leutwein tried to accomplish the same with the Herero.

Shortly after his arrival in South West Africa Leutwein had noted "with amazement the sombre mood of suspicion" prevailing among the Herero *vis-à-vis* the Germans. The first round of talks between the new Governor and Samuel Maharero in February 1894 had been completely fruitless.⁷¹ But only a few months later, discord within the ranks of the Herero provided Leutwein with a welcome opportunity to meddle in their affairs. As noted earlier, Samuel Maharero had succeeded Kamaherero as Supreme Chief of the Herero in 1890 under circumstances that aroused much controversy. Being a Christian, he was the favourite of the missionaries,⁷² and it seems that Captain François also intervened on his behalf.⁷³ Be that as it may, Samuel Maharero subsequently encountered fierce opposition from a number of Herero chiefs. Apprehensive about his own safety, he withdrew from his residence at Okahandja to Osona. In what was for him a precarious situation Samuel Maharero decided to ask Leutwein for help, a move that was to prove fateful for the Herero. For the Governor this was a godsend, and he communicated his feelings to Chancellor Caprivi in these words: "It goes without saying that I will gladly seize this welcome opportunity to consolidate our influence in Hereroland, all the more so as the reinforcements now arriving at a most propitious moment will lend me the necessary weight to do so."⁷⁴ Leutwein and Samuel Maharero had a meeting at Osona on 24 and 25 June 1894, during which the Supreme Chief declared he would be "pleased to ask for a German garrison to be stationed at Okahandja to protect him."⁷⁵ Thus, the capital of Hereroland passed into German hands without a fight.

Political Divisions among the Herero

When Nikodemus, Samuel Maharero's most implacable opponent, turned to Leutwein with the request that the Governor secure for him a position of greater prestige with regard to the Supreme Chief of the Herero, Leutwein quickly embraced this new opportunity of applying his divide-and-rule policy towards the Herero. In his above-mentioned report to Chancellor Caprivi he wrote on this score: "In accordance with Herero law, Nikodemus was indeed next in line to succeed the old Maharero, and the recognition of Maharero's son has made him a dangerous opponent of the German Government. To support his plea for recognition as an independent chief is, therefore, not only a matter of justice being done, but also a sign of political shrewdness. *It is self-evident that a politically divided Herero nation is more easy to deal with than a united and coherent one*" [My emphasis-H. D.].⁷⁶

After the divisions among the Herero had enabled Leutwein to breach their common front, his next move was to put an end to the war against Witbooi in the latter half of 1894. Following this, he immediately turned his attention to the Herero again. In the reports he addressed to the Imperial Chancellor in late 1894, he complained more and more frequently about the Herero whose stubbornness,

he said, made German colonization impossible. At this relatively early stage, Governor Leutwein outlined in very precise terms the plans of the German imperialists towards South West Africa, designed to transfer the Africans' land and cattle step by step into the hands of German settlers. He spelled out his views in a message to the Reich Chancellor dated 13 December 1894: "There are two matters on which the Herero act in a way contrary to our colonial aspirations. For one thing, they do not wish to sell land to whites, but are only prepared to allow them to live there, and for another, they do not want to make use of their cattle herds, but tend to build them up beyond all measure. The first matter is a direct obstacle to the country's progress because whites who are not owners of the land will do little to develop it, although there is an urgent need for improvement as far as water supplies and pasture land are concerned. Besides, the colony's future depends on the gradual transfer of the land from the hands of the work-shy natives into those of the Europeans, a process which will take place in the most peaceful manner. In being exclusively concerned with the enlargement of their cattle herds, the Herero are becoming unproductive for our trade and industry."⁷⁷

The gist of Leutwein's plans in late 1894 was to deprive the Herero of their land and cattle "by peaceful means". As a first step, he concluded a treaty with Samuel Maharero on 6 December 1894, establishing a southern border of Hereroland.⁷⁸ As the Governor noted, Maharero signed this treaty "with a light heart", having been offered an annual salary of 2,000 Marks in return. Under the terms of the treaty, the southern border of the Herero territory was shifted northward to the White Nosob, establishing so-called Crown territory, i.e. land placed at the disposal of the German Governor. The effects of this treaty were not long in developing.

The treaty fixing the southern boundary of Hereroland was primarily directed against the Herero headmen Tjetjo, Nikodemus and Kahimemua whose hostility to the Supreme Chief Samuel Maharero was increased further by the irresponsible way in which he had entered into a pact with the Germans. In order to intimidate the headmen most affected by the treaty, Leutwein, accompanied by Maharero, undertook a journey to the Mbandjeru or eastern Herero who gave him a chilly reception. On the Governor's arrival they had taken up position, rifles at the ready. The assessor, Lindequist, reported: "It would have been an easy matter to bring home to the Herero the German superiority in weaponry, to dislodge them from their position by firing a couple of shrapnels from our superb tactical position on the left bank of the Nosob, and to blow the whole place to smithereens. However tempting the idea to win a rapid victory and to inflict a resounding defeat on the Herero, Major Leutwein preferred the path of peaceful understanding."⁷⁹

What Leutwein achieved was that "the hostility and suspicion of the Herero [i.e. the eastern Herero-H. D.] became focussed more on Samuel Maharero than on the German Government supporting him."⁸⁰ His next step was to try to set Nikodemus at loggerheads with Kahimemua by appointing the former kap-

tein of the eastern district at the expense of the latter. Furthermore, he founded the district of Gobabis to replace the military post of Aais, a measure that marked the expansion of German military might in a northward direction, moving closer to Hereroland.⁸¹

While Leutwein was satisfied that this was sufficient to isolate and intimidate the eastern Herero, he knew that it was impossible to prevent the huge cattle herds of the Herero from crossing the hypothetical southern border of Hereroland. In an attempt to accomplish this aim, he "impounded" a cattle herd found to the south of the artificially drawn boundary line.⁸² It was clear to him, however, that cattle theft—whatever the name given to it—was tantamount to a declaration of war in the eyes of the Herero. This was a risk Leutwein did not want to take and so he hit upon the clever idea of legalizing the cattle theft by a supplementary clause to the border treaty. It was designed, on the one hand, to enable him to continue stealing cattle without let or hindrance and, on the other hand, to divert the Herero's hatred towards Samuel Maharero who had made the deal in the first place.

On 1 July 1895, therefore, Leutwein and Samuel Maharero agreed on a supplementary provision to the border treaty whereby German military patrols were given the right to "impound" five per cent of any cattle that had strayed across the border. The booty was to be divided in such a way that the twentieth part of it went to those who had "impounded" it, the remainder being shared among the Government and Samuel Maharero.⁸³ The turning over of part of the loot to the Supreme Chief was another stratagem calculated to make Samuel the target of the Herero's hatred.

In late August 1895 Leutwein and Maharero met at Grootfontein to conclude another treaty, the object this time being to define the northern border of Hereroland. The pact served to isolate and compress the Herero still further, to separate them from the Ovambo and to establish Crown territory in the north, a fact of great strategic significance in the event of war against the Herero. About this treaty, which for the time being remained a dead letter, Leutwein said: "At least, we had something written which could be put into effect any time."⁸⁴

In all these instances, Leutwein's negotiating partner was Samuel Maharero whose close collaboration with the Germans in the period from 1894 to 1903 did much harm to the Herero cause. The files of the Imperial Colonial Office contain a good many reports which throw a penetrating light on the negative role Maharero played. Unfortunately, ten more years were to elapse before the Supreme Chief revised his obnoxious policy, chiefly under pressure from the lesser chiefs, and headed the Herero rebellion against German imperialism in 1904. But for the northern boundary of Hereroland, Governor Leutwein wrote: "In being so through collaboration with the Germans. After the signing of the treaty defining the northern boundary of Hereroland, Governor Leutwein wrote: "In being so accommodating, Supreme Chief Samuel has once again rendered an inestimable service to our cause. While it would appear that the burden of evacuating the

territory ceded will largely rest with us, his signature means that, morally speaking, we have right and justice on our side so that an armed conflict is ruled out. There is every reason for me to regard his assurances of friendship as sincere. I cannot imagine hostilities breaking out between him and myself, but as he has told me on several occasions it might become necessary for us to open fire together on his own subjects, something that was a distinct possibility at Otjihahuena in May of this year. There is no denying the correctness of his assumption, yet I hope to avoid this as long as possible. By temporizing we can only gain, as the power of the Herero remains stable while ours increases from day to day."⁸⁶

On the same day, in a message to the Director of the Colonial Department, Leutwein summed up his opinion of the Herero leader as follows: "The friendship I have formed with Samuel becomes ever closer; indeed, one cannot think of a Supreme Chief that would suit our intentions better."⁸⁶ And in his book he wrote later: "His [Samuel Maharero's-H. D.] friendship has enabled us to remain masters of Hereroland despite our modest protective force. In order to please us, he did more harm to his people than we could ever have done by relying on our strength alone."⁸⁷

Unlike the treaty defining the southern border of Hereroland, the one establishing a northern boundary was not published in the official *Deutsches Kolonialblatt*. Similarly, any reference to the agreement in the reports published was deleted. Apparently this was because the German imperialists looked upon the just-defined northern border as a provisional arrangement which they hoped would not last very long. This was confirmed by Leutwein: "I have deliberately avoided using the term 'northern border' of Hereroland because it may turn out to be necessary and possible at a later stage to push the people still further back."⁸⁸ The treaty about the northern border also contained the demand that the Herero withdraw by 1 April 1894 from the land for which the (British) South West Africa Company held a concession. Yet Leutwein had his doubts about "whether the Herero will really evacuate the territory in question so easily. Here again, military pressure will be needed. However, the territory concerned is well worth the effort, particularly with a view to the profits to be derived from the activities of the owners-to-be."⁸⁹ In late 1896 the Herero were in fact expelled from the area ceded to the South West Africa Company.

Governor Leutwein, who had still spoken of a peaceful settlement of the "Herero question" a few months before, began to adopt an increasingly warlike posture in 1895. At the beginning of the year he warned that the "Herero question" was constituting a "danger" for South West Africa.⁹⁰ What he meant exactly he explained in virtually every report he sent to the Imperial Chancellor. The "danger", he said, arose from the fact that the Herero had no "understanding" of the German policy of taking their land and cattle away and transferring it to the settlers. The Governor indulged in melancholy reminiscences, asking himself "whether we struck in the wrong direction in the spring of 1893. To push the Herero back even more than Witbooi had done would definitely have been in our colonial interest.

A white man can always live next to a Hottentot, but this is much more difficult with a Herero. . . . This matter will probably not take its final shape before the Herero have assimilated so many European customs that their cattle will in time pass into the hands of white settlers."⁹¹

Leutwein's War Plans

By late October 1895 Leutwein was firmly determined to employ force against the Herero. In a message to the Imperial Chancellor he set out his aggressive schemes as follows: "Now that a measure of consolidation has been achieved in the northern district, my plans are to catch the Herero in a pincer movement under a joint command and to drive them back across their borders. Anyone offering resistance would be shot and all cattle within reach would be impounded while the Herero remaining inside their boundaries would remain unaffected. If the Herero give in, the whole affair would be over after their withdrawal from this side of the border. If, however, as is to be expected, they refuse to do so, we would penetrate the Herero territory proper from three directions—northeast, north and south—to bring the people there to their senses by dealing them a few crippling blows and seizing a few thousand head of cattle. I have come to terms with the Supreme Chief Samuel already. In all likelihood he will protect his own herds and those of his followers from the rebels and keep open the Bay Route which is indispensable to us . . . In addition, I should like to draw your attention to the fact that, in view of the vast cattle stock of the Herero, a war against them can be quite profitable."⁹²

A few days before, "trusting to get support from the mission", Leutwein had sent a letter to the missionary Viehe at Okahandja, asking him to work on the Herero to hammer home the message that: (i) they would have to obey authority, in other words, all instructions issued by Leutwein himself or by Samuel Maharero acting on his behalf; (ii) they should respect other people's property, i.e. withdraw from all areas where white settlers had established themselves; and (iii) they should not expand their cattle herds beyond measure. The letter concluded on a warning note: "Should they be unwilling to do this of their own free will, there are only two options open to us: either the German Government abandons all colonizing among the Herero or it orders a campaign of annihilation against them. The signs are that it will opt for the latter course of action."⁹³ The main purpose of the letter was to exonerate the so-called protective force from all responsibility in advance: "If the worst comes to the worst, this letter will protect the Government from any charges of having frivolously disturbed the peace, especially on the part of the Mission."⁹⁴

To put his war plans into effect, Leutwein demanded temporary reinforcements for his force, asking for 4 officers, 100 men and 4 guns. The whole garrison in South West Africa was made up of 17 officers, 510 men and 7 guns at the time.

In Berlin Leutwein's sudden war plans caused a good deal of amazement.⁹⁶ So what had prompted him, after all, to strike such a bellicose stance? It was the demands of the great land companies which made him go on the warpath. A case in point was the (British-owned) South West Africa Company which wanted to see the Herero driven out of the territory for which they had obtained a concession. The company's representative in South West Africa was Lieutenant Dr. Hartmann, who worked closely with Leutwein. Acting on behalf of the company, Dr. Hartmann drew up a war plan which Leutwein then carried out the following year: "The projected war should not be directed against the totality of the Damara, but only against those living in the east the length of the Kalahari desert. It would be necessary to maintain peace with Manasse as well as Samuel Maharero and Kambazembi, while inflicting a severe lesson on the eastern tribes, beginning with Omuramba in the north. Once these arrogant tribes, who may be receiving ammunition from the direction of the Kalahari, have been crushed, the Protectorate can undergo a really peaceful development. It would be advisable to declare war on these tribes from Windhoek, while simultaneously mounting a surprise attack from the north. I am satisfied that 50 to 100 Germans, 50 Boers and 20 to 30 Zwartboois under effective command (and after extensive reconnaissance carried out in peacetime) are capable of clearing the whole area in question all the way to Windhoek and of driving the Damara and their herds into the arms of our troops at Windhoek. In sum, it is my opinion that war with the Damara is not absolutely necessary, but quite likely. At any rate, it will pose no difficulties if we pursue a shrewd policy and make thorough preparations."⁹⁷

The German South West Africa Company, too, urged the Government to take action against the Herero who had rejected the company's claims to Spitzkoppjes and the adjacent area. The company's agent in South West Africa maintained that "the Government would only have to display a modicum of energy to reduce the Herero to silence once and for all." This was denied by a representative of the Colonial Department: "The legal aspects of the matter are completely irrelevant because we have little sympathy for the Herero and do not want this tribe to expand its influence. Rather, it is a question of power, of whether we can afford the German South West Africa Company adequate protection from the Herero at Spitzkoppjes."⁹⁸

In November 1895 Leutwein began to "impound" Herero cattle that had strayed across the border, invoking the supplementary clause to the border treaty. The 200 head of cattle seized were sold at an auction in Windhoek, yielding 2,950 Marks. After the patrol which had "impounded" the animals had received five per cent of the loot, i.e. 147.50 Marks, the rest was divided between the Government and Samuel Maharero. It is interesting to note that the Supreme Chief was given his share not in the form of cattle, but money. Leutwein explained this in a message to Chancellor Caprivi: "I think this is preferable to payment in kind. While, on the one hand, our own settlers can do with some extra cattle at a modest price I will, on the other hand, do my best to help reduce the cattle stock

of the Herero. The latter have not shown any signs of unrest so far. They have withdrawn from the areas concerned, but appear to believe for the moment that the administration here has treated them justly."⁹⁸

As it soon turned out, Leutwein's appraisal of the situation was greatly mistaken. The stealing of cattle, even though it was called "impoundment", was seen as a declaration of war by the Herero. The whole region of Damaraland was seething with discontent. The Governor first began to perceive this state of excitement in December, but he did not yet realize at the time that it had been sparked off by the "impounding" of cattle. He wrote in December: "It is clear that Hereroland is in a ferment. The people see their property threatened from all directions, not knowing what to do with their enormous herds of cattle. What is at stake is nothing less than their existence, and it will be quite a difficult job to solve this question without striking a blow."⁹⁹

By the end of January 1896 Leutwein seemed to have realized the connection between the so-called impoundment of livestock and the commotion in Damaraland: "The impoundment of an especially large number of cattle, a fact mentioned in my report of 19 November, has provoked some excitement throughout Hereroland, giving rise to several instances of hostile behaviour towards whites. An indication of that hostility was that traders visiting Hereroland left the territory in a hurry and that herdsmen who had penetrated across the border no longer confined themselves to sharing grazing land and water with the white farmers, but began to utter threats."¹⁰⁰ Only a few days later he summed up the situation as follows: "The mere fact that some livestock was seized in accordance with treaty provisions brought the Protectorate to the brink of a full-scale war against the Herero."¹⁰¹

In the light of this state of affairs, Leutwein thought it best to convene a meeting of the most important Herero chiefs in order "to bolster the position of the Supreme Chief which appears to have been severely shaken."¹⁰² The Governor submitted the following questions to the Herero assembled at Okahandja: 1. What borders do you want? 2. What are we to do with the herdsmen who crossed the border without permission? From the outset, Leutwein made it abundantly clear that the views of the Herero would not be taken into account as the problem had already been resolved through a treaty with the Supreme Chief. All he had in mind was to give them an opportunity to put their case. Hence the meeting was designed purely as a safety valve by means of which the pent-up hatred of the Herero towards German imperialism could be directed into less dangerous channels. As regards the first point, the Herero wanted to see their southern border advanced to the bank of the Seeis River whose brackish water they badly needed for their cattle. Since the matter involved only a few miles, Leutwein granted this request for the time being (!). But there were also specific motives for his "concession": "Since the border shift benefited only the western Herero, i.e. the Okahandja tribe, it prompted Nikodemus to renew his claim to Gobabis on behalf of the eastern Herero. This provided an excellent opportunity to apply the divide-

and-rule principle once again. While the Okahandja tribe's request was granted, the one made by Nikodemus was refused point-blank."¹⁰³ The consequences of this perfidious policy, on which Leutwein obviously prided himself, were not long in making themselves felt.

As regards the second point, things remained as they were, with the "impoundment" clause added to the border treaty remaining in force. Leutwein noted in a communication to the Imperial Chancellor in Berlin: "In future, I shall consult the Supreme Chief *before* deciding on the use of any cattle that has been impounded, an approach that will divest the matter in hand of the aura of ill-will it has assumed in the eyes of the ignorant populace. In conclusion, I warned those assembled against the grave risks they would run in continuing to identify themselves with each and every herdsman punished for disobedience. I told them that lasting peace would be guaranteed for all those who remained inside their border. At the same time, I referred to the understanding behaviour of their Supreme Chief who alone had ensured peace for Hereroland thus far."¹⁰⁴

It should be added here that, towards the close of 1895, Leutwein had realized that German imperialism's aggressive policies *vis-à-vis* the peoples of South West Africa had produced a growing rapprochement between the Ovambo and the Herero, hitherto at enmity with each other. The Herero obtained ammunition from the Ovambo, supplying cattle in return.¹⁰⁵ This development was not to Leutwein's liking so he tried to bring his influence to bear on the Ovambo during a journey to the north in 1895. He wrote a letter to Chief Kambonde in which he assured him of his peaceful intentions¹⁰⁶ and which the missionary Rautanen translated and explained to the Chief. The missionary described Kambonde's reaction as follows: "His answer was: 'Yes, this is all very well but I have nothing to say in reply.' In the course of our conversation he told me in no uncertain terms that he did not want any closer ties with the Germans because, he said, they came with friendly words, but when they arrived they wanted to rule as in Hereroland, depriving the Chiefs of all power. 'We don't want to be ruled!' he exclaimed. When I observed that Samuel Maharero had put his faith in Major Leutwein, he said: 'There's nothing else he can do, having surrendered himself to the Major. He is now at his beck and call, and this is something the Herero have taken greatly amiss!' Kambonde's sentiments regarding the German Government are shared by the other Ambo chiefs."¹⁰⁷ In spite of the missionary's assistance, the Germans' first attempt to gain influence with the Ovambo thus proved a complete failure. Nor did the German imperialists succeed afterwards in extending their colonial rule to the Ovambo.

With Leutwein determined since the end to 1895 to take military action against the Herero, he renewed his request for 100 reinforcements in February 1896. He considered that he would have to take on only a part of the Herero.¹⁰⁸ A further 100 men would be needed "if it was planned to take away forcibly from Chief Manasse in Omaruru the territory claimed by the German South West Africa Company and to expropriate the Zwartboois entirely in favour of the Kaoko-Land- und Minengesellschaft (Land and Mining Company)."¹⁰⁹

The Germans in South West Africa urged Leutwein to take the initiative. Leading the war faction—as Leutwein called them—were the agents of the big land and mining companies in South West Africa. The officers of the so-called protective force and the settlers were also clamouring for war. At a residents' meeting held in Windhoek in early February 1896 it was demanded that the force be reinforced by 2,000 (!) men. One month before, Leutwein had told a meeting of settlers "that a campaign against the Herero could only result in their total annihilation."¹¹⁰

The Rising of the Mbandjeru and Khauas

Leutwein's policy was aimed at provoking the Mbandjeru or eastern Herero. At the same time, he fomented discord between their leaders Nikodemus and Kahimemua. When the tension first developed between the two, Leutwein noted with satisfaction that "it can only be in our interest if the Herero break up into numerous rival chiefdoms."¹¹¹ With this in mind, the Governor had conceded to the western Herero the Secis River as their southern border whereas he had turned down the claim of the Mbandjeru to the Gobabis area, the best pasture land around. Moreover, more and more German settlers were receiving land from the settlement company in that particular area¹¹² so that the Mbandjeru found themselves hemmed in earlier than other tribes. A group of Herero led by Kahaka¹¹³ had already left South West Africa to settle down across the border in Bechuanaland "partly because they were displeased with German rule, partly because they were opposed to Samuel's recognition as Supreme Chief."¹¹⁴

All the factors mentioned here combined to produce a rising tide of discontent among the Mbandjeru. As Hendrik Witbooi testified later, Nikodemus had begun to make overtures to him and Simon Kopper in November 1895, asking them how they felt about German "protection". He said "he found German patronage intolerable, what with the Germans stealing his cattle and not a single cup of water being available in Gobabis."¹¹⁵ Nikodemus invited Witbooi to meet with him as he wished to dissociate himself from the Germans. But Witbooi was evasive. Nikodemus was more successful with the Khauas whom he brought into the Gobabis area.

In late March 1896 the Mbandjeru and Khauas staged a joint rebellion against German imperialism. This was the first time the Nama (Khauas) and Herero (Mbandjeru) fought against the Germans together. This significant fact was of little consequence, however, because Leutwein had managed to isolate the Mbandjeru and Khauas completely through his cunning divide-and-rule policy. Again, the members of the Rhenish Missionary Society were playing a sinister role. It was as a result of their influence—as the missionary Irle later admitted—that Tjetjo, Kambazembi and the Christian section of the Mbandjeru did not take part in the uprising.¹¹⁶ Even after the outbreak of the fighting the Khauas turned to Hendrik

Witbooi for help twice, but in vain. Witbooi could easily have tipped the scale. If he had joined the insurgents, all the Nama and Herero tribes would have risen up in arms at this early stage.¹¹⁷ But since Samuel Maharero, Hendrik Witbooi and, later, Simon Kopper as well were on the German side, the joint uprising of the Mbandjeru and Khauas was isolated from the first and, consequently, doomed to failure.

The hostilities, which lasted from late March to mid-May 1896, will not be described here in detail.¹¹⁸ The combined Mbandjeru and Khauas forces were fighting valiantly. For example, they twice attacked the German troops commanded by Captain Estorff near Gobabis, inflicting heavy losses on them. Even Leutwein recorded "the lack of bravery among the Herero on our side as compared with those fighting with the enemy". He frankly admitted: "The latter were defending their means of subsistence, especially their cattle herds, while the former were fighting for a cause that was not their own."¹¹⁹ In order to have the rebel leaders captured dead or alive, Leutwein put a price on their head: 3,000 Marks for Nikodemus and 1,000 Marks for Kahimemua. Subsequently, he raised the reward offered for Kahimemua's capture to 3,000 Marks as well. As had been the case during the Hornkranz raid in 1893, the troops fired indiscriminately, killing many women and children.

The German press embarked on a virulent campaign against the insurgent Africans. Dr. Karl Dove, *privat-docent* of geography in Berlin, wrote in the columns of the *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung*: "It is to be hoped that the Imperial Governor will not be prevented by the sentimental humanitarianism of certain quarters from sending all the Khauas falling into his hands to the gallows . . . There is no place for sickly sentimentalism!"¹²⁰ As a matter of fact, such exhortations were quite unnecessary as the "messengers of civilization" were acting ruthlessly enough. Lindequist, for example, ordered twelve Herero taken prisoner near Siegfeld on 18 and 19 April to be shot the following day.¹²¹ This criminal treatment of defenceless African prisoners of war marked the beginning of a development that was to become the rule rather than the exception during the great uprisings from 1904 to 1907.

Without referring to the actual shooting of captured Africans, a fact that went unmentioned in his official reports, Leutwein took up this theme in his correspondence with the Reich Chancellor. The Governor was against "extending the Geneva Convention to colonial wars. As yet, I have only been accused of excessively humane treatment of the natives, which gives me the right to oppose such views. Peaceful natives must be treated humanely at all events. But to adopt the same approach towards rebellious natives is to be inhumane towards our own fellow-countrymen. After all, any captive who escapes will fire on us again at the first opportunity that offers. Given that, a consistent colonial policy would require that all prisoners capable of bearing arms be killed. I, for one, would rather not resort to such a drastic method, but neither would I upbraid those who did. Any colonial policy is an inhumane affair because it can ultimately lead only to a curtailment of

the rights of the indigenous population in favour of the invaders. Anyone who disagrees with this is bound to reject any colonial policy, which would at least be a logical standpoint. What one must not do is first deprive the natives of their land on the basis of doubtful treaties, putting at risk the lives and health of one's compatriots, and then indulge in humanitarian fantasies in the Reichstag as quite a few of our deputies there have done."¹²²

In German eyes the war against the Mbandjeru served two purposes. Leutwein's close cooperation with Samuel Maharero and Hendrik Witbooi and the resulting isolation of the insurgents was calculated to have an intimidating effect on all other South West Africans, dissuading them from putting up resistance to the Germans. On the other hand, Leutwein took advantage of the conflict to practise cattle theft on a large scale. As early as 1895 he had pointed out that a war against the Herero would be a profitable undertaking in view of their large stock of cattle. With the fighting still going on, the capture of cattle was declared a major priority. Leutwein reported that 3,000 head were seized in an engagement near Otjunda on 6 May.¹²³ As he informed the Imperial Chancellor, he subsequently "dissolved" a cattle post belonging to Kahimemua (1,200 head) and another owned by Kahikaeta (likewise 1,200 head).¹²⁴ But it was not until after the fighting that theft of cattle was practised systematically. In his previously mentioned report to the Chancellor, the Governor said that he would send Major Mueller to the east again with the bulk of the armed force "to exact the reparations imposed on the vanquished . . . At any rate, this war will not be a burden to the Imperial treasury. Furthermore, it will provide a number of settlers with a foundation on which to build a stock of cattle while trimming the oversize cattle herds of the Herero to some extent."¹²⁵

On 18 June 1896 Leutwein gave orders to Major Mueller "to confiscate 6,000 head of cattle among the Herero who had been involved in the rebellion in the east." Since the Herero who had actually taken part in the uprising had lost most of their cattle during the fighting, Major Mueller's attention in exacting these "reparations" concentrated on those among the Herero who had kept out of the rebellion under the influence of the missionaries. He conducted "interrogations" of their chiefs and headmen to prove that they had "aided and abetted the rebels". Thus, on 23 September 1896 he sentenced Chief Omu-Koatjombe to turn over 1,000 head of cattle and all his rifles on charges of indirect participation in the rebellion.¹²⁶ The collusion between the Government and the mission was paying dividends.

Leutwein was highly pleased with the results of the marauding expedition that Major Mueller had undertaken on his behalf. He told the Reich Chancellor that "the cattle claimed from the vanquished as indemnity have been confiscated in so far as this was possible, with the exception of approximately 1,000 head."¹²⁷ Several years later Leutwein confirmed that, all told, 12,000 head of cattle had been seized from the Mbandjeru in 1896-97.¹²⁸

After the end of the hostilities Leutwein staged a "trial" of Nikodemus and

Kahimemua both of whom had in the end surrendered to the German troops. This "court-martial" was held at Okahandja in order to intimidate the so-called Riarua faction, which opposed Samuel Maharero. The sentence was a foregone conclusion: death by firing squad. It was carried out the next morning. Samuel Maharero was among those who expressly demanded the carrying out of the death sentence.¹²⁹ The lesser chiefs were condemned to long terms of forced labour. But only a little while later they made an attempt to flee. Of the twelve headmen involved, one was killed and another severely wounded while the other ten managed to escape.¹³⁰

The rising of the Khauas and Mbandjeru in 1896 was an important event in South West African history because this was the first time that Nama and Herero tribesmen fought together against their principal adversary, the German imperialists. Owing to the disastrous policy of collaboration with the German colonial power practised at this stage by Samuel Maharero and Hendrik Witbooi, the Khauas and Mbandjeru found themselves in total isolation, which was the ultimate reason for their defeat. As for Leutwein, he made the following assessment of the crushing of the 1896 rebellion: "I consider that campaign the most important step we have taken in recent years to consolidate our sway over the Protectorate."¹³¹

With the fighting long over, a 400-strong contingent of fresh troops arrived in South West Africa. These reinforcements had not been called in by Leutwein, but by the German Consul-General in Cape Town, Bruno von Schuckmann. When word of the uprising reached him, he, together with a certain Herr Berndt of the *Alldeutscher Verband* (All-German Association), magnified the story beyond measure, raising the spectre of a widespread revolt and demanding reinforcements. In response, the Kaiser promptly ordered the garrison force in South West Africa to be increased by 400 men. An application for the funds required was immediately made in the Reichstag. A supplementary Bill for 2 million Marks had to be introduced which was passed into law at one sitting with all three readings following in rapid succession.

The German Foreign Office gave Leutwein the following instructions as to how he should employ the newly arrived contingent: "In any event, you will have to rely on your own judgement and on the rich experience you have accumulated in the country in deciding to what extent the now greatly expanded protective force can be used for tasks other than those arising from the current uprising."¹³² It added that the permanent stationing of a force of that size was out of the question. On the other hand, further reinforcements could be obtained on a temporary basis if this would lead to a definite stabilization of the situation in South West Africa.

The passage suggesting that the reinforcements might be "used for tasks other than those arising out of the current rebellion" was a diplomatic way of saying that the South West Africans and especially the Herero should be disarmed, a demand that had been persistently raised by chauvinistic circles in Germany.

Leutwein was not opposed to this demand by any stretch of the imagination, but he knew that it was impossible to fulfil. In a message to Chancellor Caprivi he said that "provided we proceed slowly, this matter [the disarming of the South West Africans-H. D.] will take care of itself without any risk of bloodshed. Besides, it is my intention to disarm individual *werfs* and tribes mercilessly as soon as the behaviour of the natives concerned provides me with a legitimate reason to do so."¹³³

This was a policy that Leutwein had already used against the now defected Khauas and Mbandjeru. It goes without saying, he said, "that the insurgents we were facing in the last campaign have had their weapons taken away from them and that I will apply the same method in dealing with the unruly tribesmen in Omaruru. Therefore, any war will result in a partial disarming of the Herero nation, their own fellow-tribesmen helping to bring this about. The compulsory marking of rifles, the confiscation of unmarked ones and the stricter enforcement of the ban on ammunition supplies will accomplish the rest. The same object will be achieved either way, without force being used."¹³⁴

In order to put his new 400-strong contingent to some use, Governor Leutwein returned to his long-cherished plan of separating Hereroland from Ovamboland through the occupation of the (British) South West Africa Company's territory: "This will have to be done some day, and it would only be logical if we exploit the opportunity now before us."¹³⁵ As has been mentioned already, the occupation of the South West Africa Company's territory led to the Herero being expelled from the area within a short period of time.

After the arrival of the 400 reinforcements, the German armed force in South West Africa consisted of about 900 men. While Leutwein had previously been interested in obtaining ever new reinforcements, he had now reached a stage where the problem of supplies began to pose difficulties. As a result, he found himself compelled to send about 200 men back to Germany and to fix the level of the so-called protective force at about 700 men. In his often cited report to the Imperial Chancellor, Leutwein gave the following reasons for this measure: "In order to maintain a continuous supply link with the coast, a pool of 20 to 30 ox wagons with 20 oxen each is required for every 100 men of the protective force, which adds up to between 400 and 600 oxen. For the sake of mobility in war, each contingent of 100 men also needs 100 horses. These factors set definite limits to any increase in the force." Leutwein's conclusion was "that the next step in consolidating our rule must not be to build up our protective force beyond measure, but to build railway lines, notably one linking the coast with Windhoek."¹³⁶

South West Africa's Economic Situation, 1893-1902

Before further recounting the history of the South West African's struggle against German imperialism up to 1903, let us take a look at the economic development of the territory from 1893.

Cecil Rhodes, the archetypal British imperialist, was intent on bringing the whole of Southern Africa under British control. The first move in that direction was to be the incorporation of the two Boer republics. At the same time, he had already set his sights on South West Africa, Angola (at least its southern part) and Mozambique.¹³⁷ To gain his ends in South West Africa he adopted a double strategy. One method was to hem it in by acquiring land adjacent to the territory. For example, all the land adjoining South West Africa in the east belonged to Rhodes's British South Africa Company, then usually referred to as the Chartered Company. In the late 1890s it bought the assets of the British West Charterland Company whereby the area in the vicinity of Lake Ngami in the northwestern portion of Bechuanaland also came under Rhodes's sway.¹³⁸ The territory to the north of South West Africa, in Angola, was in the hands of the Mossamades Company in which Rhodes had a controlling interest.¹³⁹ South West Africa was thus encircled by his various companies.

The other technique the British empire-builder employed was that of economic penetration.¹⁴⁰ He used the South West Africa Company as a lever, with a number of subsidiaries such as the Kaoko-Land- und Minengesellschaft and the Hanseatische Land- und Minengesellschaft springing up in the following years. In the course of 1896 the South West Africa Company also managed to extend its influence to the South African Territories Company, which had emerged from the Kharaskhoma Syndicate. The upshot was that in the mid-1890s British monopoly capital as typified by Cecil Rhodes was dominant in the South West African economy.

The failure of the Jameson Raid in early 1896,¹⁴¹ an operation aimed at the conquest of the Boer republics, put an abrupt end to the ambitious imperialist designs pursued by Cecil Rhodes. He was forced to abandon his plans regarding South West Africa as well. His chief interest in the following period was the realization of his Cape-to-Cairo dream¹⁴² for which support from the German imperialists was essential. For this reason he made a 180-degree turn in his attitude towards Germany, seeking to bring about an understanding with German imperialism. In March 1899 he paid a visit to the Kaiser.¹⁴³ The result was the conclusion of an East African telegraph convention and a railway agreement¹⁴⁴ between the German Government and Cecil Rhodes. The understanding reached between British and German imperialism over Southern Africa removed—at least for the time being—any political risks to South West Africa that might have arisen from Britain's economic preponderance there. In 1898 the German side had ushered in a development calculated to replace British capital in South West Africa by German capital primarily coming from the Deutsche Bank and the Disconto-Gesellschaft.¹⁴⁵

The latter half of the 1890s saw an increased influx of German settlers. Whereas there had been only 310 Germans in South West Africa in 1891, their number had increased tenfold by 1 January 1903, reaching 2,998, with the white population being 4,640 overall.

Disaster struck South West Africa with elemental force in 1897 when an outbreak of *rinderpest* wiped out large parts of the Herero's vast cattle herds, half of the animals perishing in a matter of six months.¹⁴⁶ No accurate data are available about the total number of the Herero's cattle before the outbreak of the disease, and neither do we have any exact figures to indicate the losses suffered. A handbook published by H. Meyer says that 90 per cent of the cattle were cut down by the *rinderpest*.¹⁴⁷ J. Irle, who lived among the Herero, reported that the wealthiest among them were often left with barely five per cent of their herds.¹⁴⁸

The Germans began to vaccinate their own animals to halt the spread of the disease, thereby managing to save between 50 and 95 per cent of the white settlers' livestock. There were also some instances of the Herero's cattle being vaccinated, but apparently unsystematically. Fertile grazing land was taken away from the Herero in exchange for this service.¹⁴⁹ In that way they lost not only most of their livestock, but their land as well. The *rinderpest* outbreak of 1897 left the Herero greatly impoverished.

The colonial administrator, Friedrich von Lindequist, informed the Imperial Chancellor "that some small bands of Herero have of late emigrated from the Protectorate with what has been left of their cattle herds after the *rinderpest*. Leading the way was 40- to 50-strong group from the Grootfontein area who set out in a northeasterly direction. It remains to be seen whether they have gone to British or Portuguese territory."¹⁵⁰

For the German settlers in South West Africa the outbreak of *rinderpest* turned out to be a great boon. By the time the plague subsided, the price of cattle had risen to three times the previous level.¹⁵¹ It was only now, with the Herero out of competition, that the rearing of cattle became a profitable business. On the other hand, the cattle losses marked the beginning of a process in which the Herero ceased to be herdsmen and became 'free' wage labourers, which had always been the declared aim of their colonial masters. The *Hamburgische Korrespondent* wrote on this score: "If hunger forces large numbers of natives to seek employment and pay, one can fix their wages . . . in an appropriate form. Only under such changed conditions is it possible to undertake the settling of the country with any fair chance of success. Those who know the country are therefore of the opinion that the consequences of the *rinderpest* can be very beneficial for the development of the Protectorate."¹⁵²

With the cattle plague barely over, a terrible epidemic broke out among the Herero early in 1898. According to Irle it claimed 10,000 lives within a few months.¹⁵³ It appears to have been an outbreak of typhoid fever. Two more visitations lay in store for the Herero in the two years following when the country suffered first an invasion of locusts and then a devastating drought.

The first railway line, linking Swakopmund with Windhoek, was constructed between 1897 and 1902. Since the German Government, in its Damaraland concession of 1892, had granted the (British-owned) South West Africa Company a ten-year monopoly over the construction and operation of a railway, it had to

persuade them first to surrender their rights. In return, the South West Africa Company demanded mining rights in Amboland, which was unquestionably a good bargain. The railway between Swakopmund and Windhoek was not built to a normal gauge, but to the narrower so-called Cape gauge. Running more or less parallel, a telegraph service was also established between Swakopmund and Windhoek and a 375-metre-long pier built in Swakopmund to improve landing facilities.

The Rising of the Afrikaaners

After this detour, let us return to the struggle of the Herero and Nama against German imperialism in the period 1897–1903. In the wake of the uprising of the Mbandjeru and Khauas in 1896 there was another insurrection the following year, which involved the Afrikaaners, a Nama tribe. Towards the end of the 19th century the remnants of this once powerful tribe, which had been almost annihilated in the middle of the century in bloody inter-African disputes, were living in the extreme southeast of South West Africa on the Orange River. If mentioned at all, the uprising of the Afrikaaners is usually depicted as a case of cattle thieves being punished by the German troops. This version was maintained even in most official reports. However, as usual, such stories from imperialist quarters must be taken with a grain of salt. After all, Hendrik Witbooi, too, was often disparagingly described as a "robber chief" before 1894. And indeed, the insurrection of the Afrikaaners takes on a new complexion when considered in the light of the facts.

The uprising was directly related to the measures which Leutwein had ordered to prevent the spread of the *rinderpest* to South West Africa. One of these was to keep a 20-kilometre-wide strip along the border free from any cattle. As the Afrikaaner tribe was living in the border area this meant expulsion northwards. The German troops were under orders to kill any animals found within the designated area, and they did so on more than one occasion.¹⁵⁴ But under African law the expulsion of a tribe and the killing of cattle were tantamount to a declaration of war whatever the reasons involved. The only one among the German officers and civil servants to perceive the causal relationship between the Governor's measures against the *rinderpest* and the rebellion of the Afrikaaners was Burgsdorff who distinctly argued in a report that the causes of the insurrection "lay in resentment at the provisions of the *rinderpest* regulations in Keetmanshoop district."¹⁵⁵

The uprising took the following course: on 5 July 1897 the first armed clash between a German patrol and the Afrikaaners took place near Kaudaus. To avoid defeat the German patrol beat a hasty retreat. Leutwein described the engagement as follows: "Bunsen, the commanding officer, displayed dash and vigour in carrying out the operation. But that it was mounted in the first place, with 16 men facing 100,¹⁵⁶ shows that he severely underrated the enemy's strength, as he found to his cost. In sober fact, the outcome was that we withdrew from the battlefield

leaving two dead in the hands of the enemy. The Hottentots will interpret this as a victory and, consequently, attract support from many sides."¹⁵⁷ Bunsen had to admit in his report that "if we had tarried another fifteen minutes this would have meant the loss of our horses . . . Inevitably, the entire patrol would then have been wiped out."¹⁵⁸

The message that Leutwein had for him was that he should have secured the cooperation of the Bondelswarts, the Veldschoendragers and, if possible, the Witboois as well, before undertaking such a venture: "At any rate, there is no chance of succeeding, without the assistance of natives, against a warlike tribe like that whose warfare is reminiscent of the Witboois."¹⁵⁹ Leutwein outlawed the leaders of the Afrikaaners, putting a price on their head.

Another engagement occurred on 2 August 1897, with Bondelswarts and Veldschoendragers taking part in the fighting on the German side, and Witboois joining it later. Leutwein noted that "the operation cannot be called an unqualified success because we have failed to destroy the enemy, which is the sole aim in any colonial war."¹⁶⁰ The Governor was fully aware that, politically speaking, the uprising of the Afrikaaners, who were fighting an isolated battle in the extreme southeast of South West Africa, did not pose any risk to German imperialism. Nevertheless, he made a point of adding in a report to the Imperial Chancellor "that in new colonies failure on the part of the authorities may always have political implications in the long term."¹⁶¹

Direct collusion between German and British imperialism made itself felt for the first time during the campaign against the Afrikaaners. In the engagement that took place on 2 August, the Afrikaaners had been surrounded by German troops from three directions. They had no option but to flee across the Orange River, but there the English were awaiting them. So all they could do was to remain in their position until darkness fell, constantly subjected to German artillery fire which killed 37 of them, including women.¹⁶² After dark the survivors managed to flee across the Orange River. Burgsdorff immediately notified the British garrison in Arris of this fact, enabling them "to take the Kividdoe [leader of the Afrikaaners-H. D.] and his three sons prisoner with the greatest of ease."¹⁶³ At the request of the German district officer-in-charge, they and the other captured Afrikaaners were extradited, court-martialled and, in Leutwein's laconic words, "shot to the last man".¹⁶⁴ The Afrikaaner tribe had ceased to exist.

The Rising of the Zwartboois

No sooner had the uprising of the Afrikaaners in the far southeast been crushed than riots broke out in the northeastern part of the country in late 1897 among the Zwartboois, a relatively strong Nama tribe in the Kaokoveld. The disturbances had been provoked by direct German interference in the tribe's internal affairs. In May 1897 Captain Estorff had arbitrarily deposed and captured their kaptein,

David Zwartbooi, for alleged preparations for an anti-German uprising, replacing him as leader by Lazarus Zwartbooi. The latter found himself up against fierce opposition spearheaded by Samuel and Joel Zwartbooi. When the Germans meddled in tribal affairs again, hostilities erupted early in December 1897.

The Zwartboois were living in the Kaokoveld, a portion of territory that had been ceded to the Kaoko-Land- und Minengesellschaft, a subsidiary of the South West Africa Company. The general agent of the two English land companies in South West Africa might be expanded beyond the limit of the Kunene River. He outbreak of fighting because it held out the prospect of a distinct improvement in the situation of the companies he represented. Therefore, he wrote in a secret report addressed to the district chief, Lieutenant Ziegler: "Now that the war has begun, I deem it to be in the best interests of Germany (!) to see it through without mercy, to clear the Kaokoveld and to make arrangements for war on Ovambo-land as well. The time is ripe for a clean sweep."¹⁶⁵ So Dr. Hartmann wished to take advantage of the hostilities to drive the Africans out of the territory for which the Kaokogesellschaft held a concession and to extend the war to Amboland with a view to subjecting the Ovambo in addition.

In a further letter Dr. Hartmann attempted to win the Director of the Colonial Department over to his plans. He cleverly concealed the interests of his British-owned companies behind a smokescreen of chauvinistic rhetoric suggesting that South West Africa might be expanded beyond the limit of the Kunene River. He wrote: "I am afraid the war will take on vast proportions. But circumstances are propitious because we now have a solid reason to take determined action against the north. This is a most opportune moment for making diplomatic representations to Portugal. We may say, of course, that we have no intention of enlarging our Protectorate, but only want to digest what we have got. If only our Protectorate were not as unattractive as it is! If only we had a better landing site apart from Swakopmund in the north! All the greater is the need for a serious effort on our part to secure the northern bank of the Kunene River, Tiger Bay and, if you like, all the Ovambo tribes as well. The Portuguese will hardly bring them to heel."¹⁶⁶

Hartmann had already succeeded in winning over the Governor's deputy, Lindequist, to his plans. He had made him believe that there was a risk of the Zwartboois moving northward to settle on Portuguese territory, a development which had to be prevented at all costs. In an official report to the Colonial Department, Lindequist delineated the following adventurist plans: "In my estimation the cardinal question is what the Portuguese Government intends to do in order to prevent the insurgents reaching Portuguese territory by crossing the Kunene River north of Zessfontein and to forestall any possibility of the Portuguese Ovambo tribes becoming involved and the German Ovambo continuing to be supplied with ammunition. If the Portuguese Government is incapable of taking effective action, it may well become necessary for Germany to land a force of about 200 men in the Great Fish Bay to engage the rebels from the north. This would be the right moment for subduing Ovamboland either peacefully or by

armed might and, simultaneously, securing a better frontier with the Portuguese and, possibly, a good harbour north of the Kunene as well. *There will possibly never again be a golden opportunity like this to settle the northern border of the colony in accordance with our wishes.*" [My emphasis—H. D.]

The Colonial Department, however, was unconvinced. What Lindequist had failed to take into account was that the interests of the German South West Africa Company were paramount in Berlin. That company and its representatives in the Reichstag and in various parliamentary committees were, of course, opposed to the idea of strengthening the position of the (British) South West Africa Company and its subsidiaries which had broken the monopoly of the German South West Africa Company. Therefore, the chilly reply from Berlin was: "Remain on the defensive in your northern campaign."

A significant aspect of the Zwartbooi rising, which will not be examined here in detail, was the fact that, just as during the revolt of the Mbandjeru and Khauas in 1896, Nama and Herero tribesmen were fighting against German imperialism together despite a border conflict that was simmering between them. Fighting on the side of the Zwartboois were the Topnaars, a small Nama tribe led by Jan Uichamab, and the lesser part of the western Herero under Headman Kambatta. If the hostilities remained on a comparatively modest scale, this was because Samuel Maharero and Hendrik Witbooi intervened on the German side again, each putting 100 men into the field. The uprising was yet another occasion for the German colonialists to enrich themselves, even though the Zwartboois were not as well endowed with cattle as the Mbandjeru had been.

After the fighting had continued from December 1897 until March 1898, the Zwartboois at last surrendered under the influence of the missionary, Riechmann. 150 men and approximately 400 women and children were marched into captivity at Windhoek. In Omaruru 25 captured Herero, including the son of Kambatta, were tried by a court-martial which sentenced them to five years' confinement in chains on charges of "high treason". They were turned over to a railway construction unit. For once, the captives were not shot owing to the need for cheap labour.

As for the Topnaars, who had withdrawn to Zessfontein in the extreme north-west of the country, any punitive action against them would have involved a costly and gruelling campaign. Since the Colonial Department had issued instructions to the effect that the German troops remain on the defensive, Lindequist had no option but to seek an arrangement with the Topnaars through diplomatic channels. He therefore confined himself to demanding that the Topnaars hand in their rifles and turn over 1,000 head of small stock as "reparations", bearing in mind "that no protection treaty had been concluded with the Topnaars, that only a fraction of the tribe took part in the war and that according to reliable sources Jan Uichamab and his 35 warriors had yielded to pressure from the mightier Zwartboois rather than intervened on their own initiative, and not forgetting, either, that because of the cost involved another military operation ought to be avoided

by all means." In return, Jan Uichamab was allowed "to continue residing in Zessfontein a free man".¹⁶⁸ With the acceptance of these terms the uprising in the northwest of South West Africa was over.

In suppressing the Zwartbooi rising, German imperialism had killed two birds with one stone. For one thing, it had "confiscated" the area inhabited by the Zwartboois, fulfilling the demand of the Kaokogesellschaft that its land concession area be "cleared" of the Zwartboois, and for another, the captured tribesmen provided a cheap pool of labour for the construction of the railway.

The Bondelswarts and Bethanie Resist Weapons Control

Within months of the uprising there were rumblings of discontent in Namaland. This time the resentment had been caused by a German directive to have all rifles marked. The Africans rightly looked upon this measure as a first step towards their complete disarming. With Hendrik Witbooi staying on the sidelines, the opposition remained confined to the Bondelswarts and the Bethanie people. Late in 1898 Leutwein, accompanied by 100 men and 4 guns, undertook an expedition into the south where he was joined by Hendrik Witbooi and his men. Finding themselves entirely isolated, the Bondelswarts and Bethanie people decided not to seek an armed confrontation. Leutwein had them put on trial, the tribunal finding them guilty of having violated the treaty of protection. They were condemned to paying for the cost of Leutwein's expedition. This was a clever move as the Governor knew full well that the two Nama tribes were not in a position to raise money. All that had been left to them, apart from some cattle, was their land. So he "generously" indicated his readiness to accept cessions of land in payment for their "debts". In their drive to dispossess the African population the Germans had thereby reached a new stage. Having first deprived them of their cattle by "legal" methods, they now set out to appropriate their land.¹⁶⁹

In May 1899 the district officer of Gobabis reported that the Herero tribe under Tjetjo were unwilling to have their rifles marked. Also, he had been notified that Tjetjo and his tribe were planning to cross over into British territory. The officer felt that this should be prevented at all costs. Therefore, he proposed that the Tjetjo tribe be disarmed and that Traugott, Tjetjo's energetic son, be arrested.¹⁷⁰

Governor Leutwein was keenly aware that it would be impossible to disarm the entire Tjetjo tribe without bloodshed. He did not believe it would be a disaster if the Tjetjo tribe were to cross the border "because this would result in the establishment of another substantial piece of Crown land."¹⁷¹ Leutwein had a feeling that the differences with Tjetjo were attributable to the "fiery temper" of the district officer at Gobabis. He advised him to refrain from any action until his own arrival.

Early in September Leutwein and his armed force arrived in Gobabis. The impression he gained from a conversation with Tjetjo and Traugott was that it

would be comparatively easy to reach an understanding with the old Chief Tjetjo whereas the dynamic Traugott was a dangerous opponent: "The latter has not, as yet, reconciled himself to the new scheme of things, but has retained his urge for independence." This assessment determined his approach to the Chief and his son.

His opening move was to pay a visit to Tjetjo's *werf*, escorted by his soldiers. At first, Leutwein treated the old chief very kindly. But in order to intimidate him "we did some artillery shooting practice the following day, using slightly spoilt ammunition we had taken with us for this purpose."

The Governor then went to see Traugott, telling him that "he had been such a constant source of unrest in the east that the German Government, in the light of the experiences it had had with his cousin Nikodemus, had lost all confidence in him. What was needed, therefore, on his part, was not mere promises that he would mend his ways, but something more tangible like the surrender of all rifles and the resettlement of his tribe somewhere else. He was free, of course, to reject these terms. But in that case, I warned him, he had thirty minutes to prepare for battle because I would open fire as soon as that period was over."

Given the overwhelming superiority which the Germans enjoyed in terms of weaponry, Traugott had no choice but to allow himself to be disarmed. Leutwein, however, had more than that in mind; he also wanted to destroy his most dangerous enemy morally: "Owing to his indisputable energy and drive, the latter [Traugott-H. D.] was held in high regard among the Herero . . . Now that he has had his weapons taken away from him, which the native considers the greatest humiliation of all, his prestige has been dealt a severe moral blow."

After Traugott had been disarmed, the next issue was the enforced resettling of his tribe. Samuel Maharero, who "had not concealed his delight" at the humiliating treatment meted out to Tjetjo and his family, his enemies of old, suggested that Traugott and his people be moved to Okahandja. However much he struggled to avert this, Traugott was not spared this final indignity.¹⁷³

The year 1900, unlike many that had preceded it since 1893, saw no fighting between the Africans and their German colonial masters. But the beginning of 1901 witnessed the outbreak of new hostilities, this time involving the small tribe of Grootfontein (South). The tribe had refused to allow the Germans to check how many horses they owned. As can be seen from a letter sent by Nikolas Swart, kaptein of the Grootfontein tribe, to Governor Leutwein, the district officer, a young lieutenant, had demanded that the kaptein make available "50 or at least 40 soldiers complete with horses and saddlery".¹⁷³ But since the tribe included no more than 20 men capable of bearing arms, the lieutenant's demand was unrealistic. To break the kaptein's resistance, the lieutenant ultimately set about disarming him and his tribe. But at this point the Grootfonteiners took up arms, thereby forcing the lieutenant to withdraw amid threats.¹⁷⁴ Hostilities thus commenced.

There could be no doubt about the outcome of the struggle in which German

troops superior in numbers and weaponry and assisted by the Witboois were facing no more than 20 men capable of bearing arms. Although Leutwein was aware that the Grootfonteiners were acting in self-defence, he was determined to make an example of them all the same: "It must never again occur to our natives that disagreement with a Government measure gives them the right to shoot."¹⁷⁵ After the leader of the Grootfontein community had fallen in combat, his men surrendered. The booty captured by the Germans was not to be sneezed at: 60 horses, 500 oxen and 2,000 small livestock. In a final report to the Colonial Department, Leutwein wrote: "It is my intention to move the small tribe of the Grootfontein Bastaards in its entirety to Windhoek and to employ them as labour there. This will add rich pasture land to our Crown territory."¹⁷⁶

Plans to Subdue Amboland

The discussion about the desirability of war against the Ovambo was resumed in 1901. In 1897, it will be recalled, Dr. Hartmann, agent of the (British) South West Company in South West Africa, had made an abortive attempt to provoke a war against the Ovambo in the aftermath of the campaign against the Zwartboois. Always mindful of the interests of the British companies he represented, Hartmann was not deflected from his course by the setback he had suffered. When he visited Amboland in 1901 to establish the ideal route for the projected Otavi railway line to Tiger Bay, he mentioned in a report that the Ovambo were prepared for war against Germany. In another report to his company he set out the following adventurist plans under the heading "Pacification of Ovamboland": "If it were decided to build the railway across Ovamboland after the First Cataract, it would be necessary to subjugate the region before any preliminary work could be undertaken. The Portuguese and German Governments would have to take concerted action because in part the tribes are to be found on both sides. As I see it, 1,000 German troops would be sufficient to occupy the area and, possibly, to subdue all the Ovambo tribes."¹⁷⁷

Angelo Golinelli, the official in charge of South West African affairs at the Colonial Department, prepared a detailed expert brief regarding Hartmann's plans for the Ovambo. The brief is of considerable interest as it reflects the official position on this matter. As a matter of fact, Golinelli was opposed to Hartmann's adventurist plans, not because he was a pacifist abhorring colonial wars, but because it was all too obvious to him who would profit from the execution of these plans. After having listed the tremendous difficulties and costs involved in a war against the Ovambo, Golinelli asked: "And what will we get in return? We have built a snug and cosy nest for the Otavigesellschaft. The economic value of the area in question does not at present (*sic*) warrant such expenditure."

German imperialism, which after 17 years of colonial rule over South West Africa had not yet "digested" the sparsely populated territories of Namaland

and Hereroland, was neither able nor willing at that time to "swallow up" Amboland, a densely peopled region with a climate that did not appeal to Europeans. Since the subjugation of the Ovambo would have been exclusively in the interests of the (British) South West Africa Company or its subsidiaries, Berlin was not in the mood for projects that would probably lead nowhere, an attitude largely influenced by the German South West Africa Company.

There was yet another solid reason why the imperialists deemed it wiser to take a soft line with the Ovambo: they were badly needed as 'free' wage labourers, notably for the construction of the railway. Golinelli observed on this score: "The more inconspicuous our behaviour in Ovamboland, the greater our chances of arousing the interest of able-bodied Ovambo for work on the railway and in the mines. We have seen in the Cameroons to what extent the urge for military action adversely affects the procurement of labour. People conversant with the situation there have told me that military expeditions, instead of promoting the solution of the labour problem, tend to reduce the pool available by many hundreds. This may be evidence of considerable firepower, but will hardly be conducive to good labour conditions. I would regret it very much if a similar result were to be experienced in Ovamboland."

Following this, Golinelli struck an ironic note in taking issue with the view that the Ovambo would have to be "subdued and pacified" before the preparations for the construction of the railway could get under way. He taught Hartmann a lesson in imperialist "peaceful penetration": "I have always been given to understand—and the English (Kitchener) have furnished practical proof of this in Egypt—that railways are built as a prelude to subjugation and pacification. Such a line will certainly have to be followed in Ovamboland."

Equally intriguing are Golinelli's remarks about Hartmann's proposal for joint action with the Portuguese to subdue the Ovambo. Having demonstrated why the Portuguese had neither the capacity nor the will to do so, he added: "Even if the Portuguese were able and willing to help us, this would *not* appear to be in our interest. Should it become necessary for us to mount a major military operation in Ovamboland at a moment not of our own choosing, we had rather undertake it on our own because this would not rule out the possibility of surreptitiously 'correcting' our northern border somewhat."¹⁷⁸ Due to Golinelli's expert brief, Hartmann's attempt to engineer a war against the Ovambo failed for the time being.

The Rising of the Bondelswarts

Whereas in 1902 there were no armed conflicts between the Africans and their German colonial masters, the year 1903 saw the revolt of the Bondelswarts, which led up to the great rebellions of the Herero and Nama in 1904. Discontent had long been rife among the Bondelswarts. They were beside themselves because their Chief Willem Christian had sold virtually all their land to the Kharaskhoma

Syndicate from which the South African Territories Company had emerged. Only by close cooperation between the German colonial authorities, the British land company and Chief Willem Christian, had the outbreak of an open rebellion been prevented. After the latter's death in late 1901 resentment among the Bondelswarts reached fever pitch. All that was needed to set off an explosion was a spark, and this was provided by the district officer, Lieutenant Jobst.

When in October 1903 several Damara lodged a complaint against the kaptein of the Bondelswarts, accusing him of having stolen a ram, Lieutenant Jobst decided to demonstrate his contempt for Africans, having already shown his contempt for Asians by his participation in the crushing of the Boxer Rebellion in China, a fact mentioned by Leutwein.¹⁷⁹ Although the "protection treaty" required him to keep out of the internal affairs of the Africans, he gladly seized upon this opportunity to intervene. He ordered the kaptein to appear before him to account for his conduct, but his summons went unheeded, the kaptein having settled the affair already. Not satisfied with this outcome, the lieutenant tried to apprehend the Bondelswarts leader by force. An exchange of rifle fire ensued in which Lieutenant Jobst, two other Germans and the kaptein were killed. This incident triggered off the rising of the Bondelswarts against German imperialism.¹⁸⁰

Governor Theodor Leutwein was taken by surprise.¹⁸¹ In a report to the Colonial Department, he criticized Lieutenant Jobst's behaviour in harsh terms: "This is not the way to treat a native kaptein. Rather, we ought to do our utmost to strengthen his authority and to rule the people through him."¹⁸² This notwithstanding, Leutwein issued a fire-eating statement in which he declared war on the Bondelswarts. It read:

"Decree by the Imperial Governor:

The kaptein of the Bondelswarts in Warmbad and his tribe have wantonly broken the peace that has reigned in this country by brutally murdering the district officer, Lieutenant Jobst, Sergeant Snay and killing or wounding several settlers. Therefore, a state of war is hereby proclaimed in the district, which will henceforth be under martial law. In the name of His Majesty the German Emperor, I call upon all loyal subjects to keep faith with the Government in the certainty that they will be amply rewarded whereas those responsible will be punished according to their desserts. A price of 500 Marks has been put on the head of each Bondelswart involved in the murder of my men. A reward of 2,000 Marks will be given to whoever brings in the head of the new kaptein. All lesser chiefs holding aloof from the rebellion and maintaining law and order among their people are hereby assured of permanent freedom and independence from the kaptein in Warmbad."¹⁸³

Leutwein's decree caused raised eyebrows at the Colonial Department because some of its passages were likely to provide ammunition for the opponents of colonial expansion in the Reichstag. One of Golinelli's main objections was that, in contradistinction to his official reports, the decree spoke of the "brutal murder of the district official" whereas it seemed more appropriate to speak of the brutal

murder of the Bondelswarts kaptein. Even more objectionable in his eyes was the fact that Leutwein had put a price on the heads of a number of Bondelswarts. Golinelli felt that one might have achieved the same purpose by offering a reward for their mere capture. Very remarkably, the Colonial Department's opinion was not made known to the Windhoek authorities, apparently on the prompting of people in high places.¹⁸⁴

The German settlers in South West Africa now embarked on a vicious campaign against the Bondelswarts. An anonymous letter published by the editors of *Woche*, a weekly paper appearing in Berlin, on 1 November 1903 said: "The Bondelswarts must be destroyed now. We trust that our protective force will take drastic measures."¹⁸⁵ One voice that was not missing in the chorus of hate-filled agitation against the Bondelswarts was that of Baron von der Bussche, the agent of the South African Territories Company at Warmbad. He wrote on 9 December 1903: "I hope this will not be considered a trifling matter, but seen as the final settling of accounts with the Bondels. There is no place for sentimentality now unless we want to see such incidents occur again in a few years' time. The tribe must no longer be allowed to have a kaptein of its own and to enjoy powers of jurisdiction. Now that it has dwindled to a few hundred souls it may as well be confined to a few reserves, and an agency will have to be set up to administer its property."¹⁸⁶

As will be remembered, it was precisely the land policies of the South African Territories Company which had caused the ill-feeling among the Bondelswarts in the first place. This was even confirmed by the district officer of Warmbad, Lieutenant von Kagenack, in a letter to Leutwein: "In my humble opinion, South African Territories was the immediate cause of the uprising in the south. This opinion has now been repeatedly confirmed by white settlers and natives."¹⁸⁷

When Kaiser Wilhelm II was informed about the outbreak of the Bondelswarts rebellion on 7 November 1903, the report of Reich Chancellor Prince Bernhard von Bülow produced one of his characteristic outbursts of fury. In the margin of the report he wrote the following note, in fact one of a long series of similarly hysterical comments: "In such a situation the Foreign Office and the Colonial Council have the temerity to *propose a reduction of our colonial force* to save money! Instead, they must be brought to battalion strength lest we lose all our colonial possessions! Who, after all, is running the war? The Foreign Office? The Colonial Council? Or the Imperial Chancellor as chief of the police force? Things are now just as intolerable here as in Spain or France.

"The Supreme Commander and the General Staff must have authority over the colonial force just as over all other branches of the Army. In an emergency like the present one, which requires large-scale reinforcements and operations, this becomes necessary anyway. The trouble is that we have no information at all about developments, dispositions, terrain, etc. Under such circumstances it is impossible for even the Imperial Prussian General Staff to make the necessary arrangements! *Civilisti taceant in militaribus!*"¹⁸⁸

The war against the Bondelswarts was taking place only on paper. Even Leutwein had to concede that the campaign "had little to offer in military terms". It was largely being waged on the diplomatic front, but this did not prevent the Governor from giving verbose descriptions of several "engagements" in the book he later published. As can be seen from a report by someone familiar with the country, these "engagements" were little more than chance encounters: "On both occasions [the reference is to two such "engagements"—H. D.] the Germans were completely taken by surprise because they had not taken any precautions."¹⁸⁹ The "engagement" that took place near Hartebeestmund on the Orange River on 22 December 1903 left the Germans badly mauled. One of their patrols was attacked by Bondelswarts while destroying a *werf* and had to flee across the river and seek refuge on British-held territory. They did so under heavy fire, their leader Colonel Böttlin, being severely wounded.

An intriguing feature of this episode is that the German and British imperialists were again working hand in glove, as is revealed by a report which the German Ambassador to the Court of St. James sent to the Foreign Office at the Wilhelmstrasse. The report shows that the British had provided covering fire for the Germans while they were making their retreat across the Orange River. The Ambassador then went on: "The British Government does not think it advisable to allow our troops to return with their weapons across the same border because this might provoke a rebellion among the Hottentots on British territory. On the other hand, the British Government does not feel that its neutral status obliges it to intern our troops because the war in question is not one between civilized nations. Its intentions are, therefore, for our men to be handed back their weapons and then to be taken to Port Nolloth or Cape Town, from where they are free to return to German South West Africa. Lord Lansdowne hopes that we will be content with the middle course he has chosen."¹⁹⁰

In practice, the British went even further by allowing those German troops who were mounted—albeit unarmed—to return across the Orange River. Their weapons and the wounded leader of the patrol were sent back to South West Africa via Port Nolloth.

By the end of 1903 the whole of Namaland was seething with discontent. Although local disturbances were immediately suppressed and thus escaped public notice, we are in possession of incontrovertible evidence of one such rising. It occurred in Maltahöhe district, which formed part of the "theatre of war". In a report to the High Command of the "protective force", Leutwein noted on 4 December 1903 "that native policemen, workers and prisoners have mutinied in the district of Maltahöhe."¹⁹¹

Leutwein, who was in no hurry to visit the "theatre of war", arrived in Keetmanshoop late in December 1903. There he received word that Captain von Fiedler had verbally concluded a three-week truce on 27 December.¹⁹² The Governor felt such a step was premature as he was in sore need of some victories to bolster up his somewhat battered position. Hence he wrote to the High Command of the

"protective force": "I personally would have liked to see Captain von Fiedler report another successful attack. But it seems that the tremendous difficulties posed by the terrain and the supply problem dissuaded him from taking such a step."¹⁹³ Prior to this, he had written to Captain Fiedler: "I lack any evidence that would enable me to say whether the truce concluded was desirable or not. The orders issued to the southern contingent, which unfortunately did not reach you, were to *wipe out* the enemy in Warmbad district. If the contingent was capable of achieving this object, the conclusion of the truce was a mistake; if it was not, the truce was the only right thing to do."¹⁹⁴

While Governor Leutwein was waiting for reinforcements to resume the fight, the great Herero rising broke out in the north, an event that immediately put a new face on the situation in the south. In order to avoid a war on two fronts, Leutwein was now keenly interested in making peace with the Bondelswarts. After several days of negotiations he succeeded in ending the state of war with them at Kalkfontein on 27 January 1904. The treaty they signed blamed "misunderstandings" for the insurrection and contained the following terms: (1) Surrender of all weapons; (2) Payment of the cost of the war through cessions of land; (3) Extradition of specified tribesman accused of "extremities". Only the first of these demands—the disarming of the Bondelswarts—was carried out while the other two proved impossible to enforce on account of the Herero and Nama uprisings.

The mood among the German settlers in South West Africa, infuriated as they were by the great rebellions, was like that preceding a pogrom. They regarded the terms of the Kalkfontein peace as far too mild. In South West African and German papers they raised shrill demands for a tougher line than the one adopted by Leutwein, especially calling for the complete abolition of tribal leaders or kapteins. Before long, they began to direct their attacks at the very foundation of Leutwein's divide-and-rule policy towards the Africans: using Africans as allies against Africans. The *Deutsch-Südwestafrikanische Zeitung* commented: "Of what use are 300 allied Hottentots if we need 300 soldiers of our own to supervise these allies?"¹⁹⁵ This was soon followed up by the observation that Lieutenant Jobst, whose aggressive stance had triggered the uprising of the Bondelswarts, "had become the saviour of many settlers in the south" because he had touched off a rebellion that would have been unavoidable sooner or later. When Lindequist, then German Consul-General in Cape Town, made himself the spearhead of the opposition to Leutwein's peace treaty with the Bondelswarts,¹⁹⁶ the Governor chose to defend his position on the Bondelswarts in a lengthy report to the Colonial Department. It said, *inter alia*: "The abolition of the tribal chieftainship of the Bondelswarts would have involved a protracted war, i.e. a war on two fronts in the Protectorate. Furthermore, our allies among the natives, whose support is essential given the weakness of our own forces, would for obvious reasons have refused to serve under our command any longer . . . In sum: I have allowed the kaptein to remain in office not on sentimental grounds but out of considerations of expediency."¹⁹⁷

The agitation against the Kalkfontein peace and against the Nama in general,

far from easing off, continued to grow in intensity in the period that followed. It reached its highest pitch in the autumn of 1904, becoming a major contributory factor to the Nama uprising against German imperialism.

The period 1893–1903 had been one of intense struggle by the South West African people against German imperialism. There was hardly a year that passed without armed conflicts taking place. But the common feature of all these struggles was that, owing to Leutwein's cunning divide-and-rule policy, they remained isolated episodes doomed to failure. Again and again Africans were fighting Africans.

Territorial Losses of the Herero and Nama

The period 1893–1903 occupies an important place in South West Africa's history for yet another reason: it saw the gradual transfer of the land and cattle of the Herero and Nama into the hands of German settlers, a development that was completed with the crushing of the great uprisings between 1904 and 1907. From the first, it had been the declared aim of German colonial rule over South West Africa to expropriate the Africans systematically. Since they had no other means of production than land and cattle, these were the main targets of the imperialists.

The Africans lost the first portions of their territory through Lüderitz's purchases whereby the coastal strip of South West Africa and the hinterland of Walvis Bay passed into German hands. Except for the area adjoining Walvis Bay, this land was relatively worthless as it was largely a sandy desert region (the Namib). All the selling was done by Nama kapteins—even in the case of territory claimed by the Herero, such as the northern coastal region (notably the Kaokoveld) and the hinterland of Walvis Bay. The Herero protested against the sales and declared them to have been illegal.

During the first ten years of German colonial domination the Herero did not sell any land at all. The chiefs had no authority to do so because the land was still communal property. All they did was to give individual Europeans, including the missionaries, the right to use some of their land. Whenever a European moved away or died, the land reverted to the Herero. This explains the resentment that came over the Herero in the '80s when members of the Rhenish Missionary Society made available a building in Otjimbingwe to the German Imperial Commissioner without being entitled to do so under Herero law.

With the colonial zealots in Germany eager to see South West Africa become a colony for German settlers, a discussion got under way at the beginning of the 1890s which revolved around the theme of the gradual transfer of the South West African people's land and cattle into the hands of German settlers. According to Captain Curt von François, occupation rather than "protection" was the name of the game if the land issue was to be resolved in the interests of the German colonists. He once remarked that the Africans' ownership rights could not be disputed with words, but only with rifles. In October 1890 Captain François had

occupied Windhoek. Samuel Maharero, who had just succeeded his father as Supreme Chief of the Herero, protested against the occupation, but he was unable to do anything about it. With one stroke of the pen two years later in Berlin, 13,000 square kilometres of "no man's land", which in reality was part of the best land of the Herero, was awarded to an English land company.

After a final decision about South West Africa had been taken in Berlin in 1892, François came up with ever new plans for the creation of "Crown land" which, however, remained castles in the air as long as the power issue in South West Africa had not been settled in favour of German colonial rule. Of all his schemes to establish Crown land for German settlers, only one materialized at that time: the occupation of Windhoek and the surrounding area.

Under François's successor, Theodor Leutwein, the African losses of territory soon began to take on hefty proportions. The new Governor considered it his foremost task to engineer the transfer of land and cattle to the German settlers. But unlike François he was aware that, as long as German rule rested on the so-called protection treaties, the only possible approach was the *gradual* expropriation of the Africans. Any other method, say along the lines proposed by François, would at once have provoked a general uprising of the indigenous population. To give his approach a semblance of legality Leutwein entered into "treaties" with the tribal chiefs.

Having forced the Khauas to sign a treaty with the German Reich early in 1894, the Governor, in a letter to the Imperial Chancellor, gave a glowing account of the lush pasture land he had crossed and which supposedly was there for the taking. He wrote: "Technically, this territory belongs to the Khauas Hottentots, but now that they have been subjugated it can be taken away from them. They will be left with sufficient grazing land if they remain confined to the area east of the Nosob River, stretching from Gobabis in the north to Hoagusgeis in the south. The land to the west of the Nosob would revert [*sic*] to the Government."¹⁹⁸ On 1 November 1894 Leutwein issued a statement saying that a major portion of territory had been declared Crown land "under the terms of treaties concluded with the kapteins Samuel Maharero, Hermanus van Wyk and Manasse Noreseb which defined the borders of their tribal areas." This area was bounded by Hereroland to the north, the Sheep River to the east, the Ougas, Guyas and Nugoais (Zwartmodder) watering places to the south and the Nosob River to the west. The fertile pasture land of the Khauas was located within the confines of this new Crown territory.¹⁹⁹

Subsequently, Leutwein turned his undivided attention to the Herero who had the best grazing land and the largest cattle herds in South West Africa. In December 1894 he concluded an agreement with Samuel Maharero settling the northern border of Hereroland, thereby managing to halve the area originally inhabited by the Herero.²⁰⁰

In many instances, Governor Leutwein took advantage of the local uprisings that occurred before the great insurrections of 1904-07 to take away the land and

cattle of the South West African people. When another clash with the Khauas occurred late in 1894, he confiscated what remained of the area where they lived. After the Zwartbooi rising of 1897-98 the portion of the tribe involved in the rebellion was deported to Windhoek, their land being confiscated. Also confiscated was the territory of the Herero Headman Kambatta, who had taken part in the Zwartbooi rising. Chief Manasse in Omaruru, too, had to cede rich pasture land with a number of springs in return for the vaccination of his cattle.²⁰¹ After the revolt of the Grootfontein tribe in 1901, their living area was declared Crown land.

Yet the "creation of Crown land" was but one facet of Leutwein's land policy. Indeed, from about 1897 onwards settlers were directly unleashed on Hereroland. Whereas initially the Herero had refused to sell even an inch of territory—their laws did, in fact, forbid such a thing—Samuel Maharero began to dispose of the land of his people in 1897 as a result of the outbreak of *rinderpest* that year. Leutwein noted that "the Herero government [meaning Samuel Maharero—H. D.] will henceforth [i.e. from 1897 onwards—H. D.] sell farm land right in the midst of its territory."²⁰² Since the cattle plague had left Samuel Maharero greatly impoverished, he was trying to improve his precarious financial situation. He would not budge an inch on the matter despite strong protests from the lesser chiefs. As for the Germans, they were anxious to settle in Hereroland because the land there was the best and the cheapest.

When a settler wished to acquire land he could choose among three potential sellers: the land companies, the Government or the chiefs. The prices charged, however, differed considerably. An official report dating from 1902 lists the following average prices per hectare: 1 to 5 Marks for company land, 30 pfennigs to 1.50 Marks for Government land, and 50 pfennigs to 1 Mark for land sold by the chiefs.²⁰³ Given the fact that the chiefs were usually paid in kind, with the value of the goods delivered being arbitrarily determined by the settlers, the latter method of acquiring land used to save at least another 50 per cent.

The high prices charged by the land companies were meant to have a deterrent effect on prospective buyers. The companies concerned were more interested in leasing their land than selling it. They allowed vast areas to lie fallow, hoping that the discovery of minerals would greatly increase the value of their possessions. As a matter of fact, six land companies in South West Africa held over 300,000 square kilometres of territory.²⁰⁴ By early 1903 they had sold only 1,400 square kilometres to settlers whereas the area sold by the Government and by individual chiefs added up to 36,000 square kilometres.²⁰⁵

On top of the creation of Crown land and the sale of land to farmers there was also the arbitrary seizure of land by settlers.

But the colonization proper of South West Africa did not get under way until the closing years of the century. In the period 1899-1903 alone, the number of settler farmers trebled. This was due in no small measure to a marked improvement in transport conditions resulting from the construction of the Swakopmund-Windhoek railway. Before long, no more land suitable for farming was to be

had anywhere along the railway line. At the beginning of the new century the Government took measures to encourage settlement. In 1901 the Colonial Administration set up a fund from which to extend loans to German settlers. Plans were afoot for a large-scale influx of German settlers to begin in 1903. For this purpose the German Government set aside 300,000 Marks and named Paul Rohrbach, a well-known advocate of settler imperialism, Commissioner for Settlement. It was patent to everyone that the Africans would find themselves expelled from all their land in a matter of years.

The Mission's Plans for a Reserve

To forestall such a development the Rhenish Missionary Society began to demand in the mid-1890s that inviolable reserves be established for the African people. As the missionaries had thus far shown themselves anything but good friends of the Africans, it is worth taking a closer look at the motives behind their demand.

When the society founded mission stations in Hereroland in the course of the 19th century, the sites were carefully chosen.²⁰⁶ They also attracted the interest of German colonists. The Society had, in fact, no objections to the greater part of the country passing into German possession. The Mission's inspector, Dr. Schreiber, expressly confirmed this in a letter to the Director of the Colonial Department: "It would certainly be no shame but a most welcome development if the bulk of the territory passed into the hands of the white settlers, all the more so as the country is far too large for such a small population."²⁰⁷ Yet there were differences, however subtle. While the settlers argued for the complete transfer of African land, the mission "only" wanted to see "the bulk" of South West Africa become the property of German colonists. So the interests of settlers and missionaries regarding the "correct" apportionment of land were not entirely identical. The missionaries felt that the indigenous population should retain at least as much land as was necessary for the continued existence of the mission stations. They realized that if the Africans living in the proximity of a mission station lost all their land and were forced to settle elsewhere, this would also spell the end of the station. Indeed, that was what happened, for example, in 1901 when the mission station of Otjikango (Neu-Barmen) had to be closed down because the Herero had been expelled from their pastures by German settlers. Five more stations were in danger of sharing the same fate.²⁰⁸

Consequently, it was primarily a concern for the future of their stations that prompted the missionaries to advocate a policy of allowing the country's original inhabitants to keep at least some of their land. Leutwein was acutely aware of this, for he wrote: "The ulterior motive of the Mission in pressing for the establishment of reserves is self-interest. The Society is seeking to obtain permanent safeguards for its missionary work as well as for the means invested in the economic development of the country."²⁰⁹ That the well-being of the indigenous people played no role in the plans of the missionaries can be seen from a letter by the

Mission's inspector, Dr. Schreiber, to the Director of the Colonial Department in which the former proposed the creation of reserves only in that part of Hereroland where stations of the Rhenish Missionary Society were located.²¹⁰

The original idea was that the chiefs should bestow tribal land on the missionaries as a gift. This would have made the Rhenish Missionary Society one of the biggest landowners in South West Africa. Indeed, the missionary Schroeder persuaded Hendrik Witbooi late in 1896 to donate Rietmond to the Society. Schroeder thereupon asked the district officer, Burgsdorff to endorse the donation, but his request was turned down.

In a detailed report to Governor Leutwein, Burgsdorff set out the reasons why he had refused the request. He said that, if Rietmond became the property of the missionary society, this might cause serious problems for the German Government. Quite apart from the fact that the Government was opposed to the idea of the mission becoming even more powerful through the acquisition of land, there was a specific reason for not giving them Rietmond. Burgsdorff wrote: "Another reason—I would say the decisive one—must be mentioned here. It is almost certain that diamonds will be found in the Gibeon area and that mining operations will get under way shortly. In view of the expected large influx of white people the Government will deem it absolutely necessary to bring Gibeon and its immediate surroundings directly under its control. As long as Rietmond is still the residence of a kaptein, there is every likelihood that this aim can be achieved without too much trouble and sacrifice. If, however, the missionary is the undisputed ruler there and the kaptein is relegated to some inferior status . . . , the transfer of Gibeon into German hands will be a difficult and serious matter."²¹¹

The Mission's designs on Rietmond also figured in a report which Friedrich von Lindequist, then Deputy Governor, addressed to the Imperial Chancellor. In an oblique reference to the Mission, he said it was the Government's concern to see that the tribes were left with adequate land. In particular, he criticized the endeavours of the Rhenish Missionary Society "to come into possession of large portions of territory". He added that if the plans to establish reserves were put into practice the Africans would become "little more than serfs of the mission" (*sic*) and would be removed from the Government's influence. For all these reasons Lindequist supported Burgsdorff's position.²¹²

The district officer's rejection of the Mission's request made it plain that the Government and the Mission were pursuing conflicting interests. As it was the declared aim of the Colonial Administration to transfer all African land slowly but entirely into the ownership of German settlers, the Government was from the start unsympathetic to the Mission's plans for the establishment of reserves. Summing up the situation, Leutwein later noted in a report to the Colonial Department: "The Government was not interested in the early creation of reserves, but the Mission all the more so."²¹³ As late as 1901 Leutwein was of the opinion that the indigenous communities were still in possession of sufficient land and that the misgivings of the missionaries were therefore quite unfounded.

However, as he was anxious not to forgo the Mission's cooperation in holding down the African people, he took pains not to demonstrate his dislike for their plans to establish reserves too openly. His recipe was to soft-pedal on the matter: "In practical terms, it would, in my humble opinion, be just as wrong to satisfy all the Mission's demands as to reject all its requests point-blank . . . Nor can it be of any benefit to the Colonial Government to antagonize the Mission by taking too tough a line."²¹⁴

So Leutwein, rather than reject the Mission's proposals out of hand, took the sting out of them by assuming personal responsibility for the whole matter. As a result, the Mission found itself out in the cold with the promulgation of the "Imperial Decree of 10 April 1898 Pertaining to the Establishment of Reserves for Natives in the Protectorate of South West Africa". When a reserve for the Witbooi tribe had come into being, Leutwein noted with satisfaction: "The method which has been employed there and which I helped to devise while home on leave has much to commend it because the Mission is being kept out of the whole affair for the time being."²¹⁵

Having made the plans for reserves its own, the Government was now in a position to determine the pace of their implementation. In point of fact, it set up only two reserves, one in Namaland for the Witboois and another in Hereroland (Otjimbingwe). Any further projects were thrown out because the Government did not wish to see the construction of railways hindered. Leutwein decreed in May 1903 that nothing but out-of-the-way areas of comparatively modest size were eligible as sites for new reserves. The decree went on to stipulate that "all farms already purchased by whites must, of course, remain outside the reserve and so must, subsequently, any farms that settlers might be interested in buying."²¹⁶

During the negotiations on a potential reserve in Okahandja district, the Herero said, according to an account given by the missionary Diehl, that the reserve allotted to them by the Government was: "(i) too small; (ii) located in a part of the country more or less unfamiliar to most of them; and (iii) left much to be desired in terms of grazing land." The missionary described the further proceedings as follows: "Zürn [the German district officer-H. D.] summoned the Headmen again to bring the matter to a close. They were, however, sorely disappointed to hear that Herr Zürn was still insisting on the borders as originally defined by him. Indignant, they refused to sign on the dotted line. Herr Zürn thereupon dismissed them in what they said a rather rude fashion, observing that he could well do without their signatures as Samuel would be prepared to sign in their place and that would be quite sufficient."²¹⁷

The establishment of reserves did little more than delay the expropriation of the South West African people. Whatever reserves were created were abolished again after the crushing of the great uprisings.

The Cattle Losses of the Herero

Since the people of South West Africa did not plant crops, but were exclusively concerned with animal husbandry, the German colonists had set their sights not only on the Africans' land, but on their cattle as well. Settlers and traders were looking with greedy eyes on the enormous cattle herds of the Herero in particular. There are no figures to indicate the exact size of the Herero's livestock population at the beginning of the German penetration, but it is beyond all dispute that their number ran into hundreds of thousands.²¹⁸

Long before the coming of the Germans, the cattle herds of the Herero had attracted the interest of European traders who offered mainly weapons and ammunition in return. This was to remain the case after the onset of the German colonization of South West Africa. Adolf Lüderitz, while primarily interested in the territory's mineral wealth, did feel that the cattle trade was not to be despised. His agent Wegner reported in 1883 that he intended to acquire 2,000 to 3,000 head of cattle through barter deals within a year.²¹⁹ F. J. von Bülow noted that in 1890-91 alone almost 20,000 head of cattle obtained in exchange for weapons and ammunition were shipped overseas.²²⁰ Similarly, it is on record that Gustav Voigts and his brother acquired 500 oxen in a couple of weeks during a single visit to Hereroland in 1892, and as many as 700 at the beginning of the following year.²²¹ With German farmers still found only here and there in South West Africa, it was chiefly the garrison force stationed in the territory that did a roaring trade. Captain François regularly sent out soldiers to "acquire"²²² cattle in vast quantities, which he felt was essential for his armed force. Their forays yielded 639 head of cattle in 1890 and 1,233 head in 1891. The few German settlers and traders who would have liked to sell their own animals to the garrison were told each time that the latter had too much livestock already. This caused Karl Dove to observe that "the Reichstag should withhold the appropriations intended for South West Africa so that the military force there try their hand at stock-raising."²²³ When François finally imposed a ban on the import of ammunition destined for Africans, Samuel Maharero forbade his people in October 1892 to sell any more livestock to the garrison.

Under Theodor Leutwein's governorship the cattle losses of the South West Africans were fast assuming rather sizeable proportions. As discussed previously, a supplementary clause was added on 1 July 1895 to the treaty defining the southern border of Hereroland and provided Leutwein with a legal pretext for "impounding" cattle that had strayed across the southern border. In October 1895 the Governor declared that a war against the Herero would be a profitable undertaking given the size of their herds. The quelling of an uprising by the Mbandjeru in 1896-97 proved very lucrative indeed for him as he seized no less than 12,000 head of cattle. The capture of livestock invariably played a major role in subduing the local rebellions that occurred in the following years.

In 1897 the herds of the Herero were drastically reduced by an outbreak of

rinderpest. The losses sustained differed from place to place, but were sometimes as high as 90 per cent or more.

When German settlers flocked to Hereroland in large numbers between 1898 and 1903 they devised a new method of dispossessing the Herero of their livestock. They bought goods on credit and then placed them at the disposal of the Herero on the same basis. This they did several times before asking them to pay their debts. Since the Herero did not, as a rule, possess any money the traders demanded cattle instead, arbitrarily fixing the prices to be paid. Nor did they have any scruples against seizing the cattle by force. As a result again, large quantities of livestock changed hands after 1898.

When the traders lost all restraint, Leutwein tried to clip their wings somewhat by issuing a directive which provided that all commercial transactions should be on a cash basis.²²⁶ This measure was fiercely opposed during the next few years by the interested parties in the Colonial Council. The issue was finally resolved when the Imperial Chancellor, Prince Bernhard von Bülow, decreed on 23 July 1903 that there would be a one-year statute of limitations for contracts resulting from legal transactions between Africans and Europeans. The effect which this measure produced was the exact opposite of what had been intended. The traders were now over-anxious to recover outstanding debts before the year was up. One trader of Otjozondjupa, for example, demanded the simultaneous repayment of all debts, drawing up a list containing the names of 250 persons who owed him a total sum of approximately 18,000 Marks. This list he handed to the police whom he expected to collect the money for him.²²⁸

The district officer of Okahandja, Zürn, noted that "certain traders devoid of all scruples first had a certain percentage of debts transferred to their name and then undertook to enforce their repayment at their own risk."²²⁶ A report sent by Paul Rohrbach, the Commissioner for Settlement, to Governor Leutwein throws more light on these practices: "Siemens and Schult are said to have been the first to seize cattle by force. They are Germans who emigrated from the Transvaal two and a half years ago and then began to buy up claims on Herero—often very dubious ones—from other traders, farmers and merchants in order 'to acquire cattle the cheap way'. Previously, debts owed by Herero had been regarded as more or less doubtful in respectable business quarters and had been entered in the books at a value much lower than their nominal value. Commercial practice during the last two years has followed a radically different pattern. This may be illustrated by quoting what Herr Schröder, who was murdered at Okandjose, said in reply to the merchant Wecke in Swakopmund after the latter had expressed doubt that the Herero really owed Schröder 3,000 Marks: 'I will turn these 3,000 Marks into at least 4,000 to 4,500 Marks' worth of cattle.' How this is being done has been reported by an eye-witness. When a Herero entered Dinter's store in Okandjande to repay the 300 Marks he owed the owner in cash, the latter refused to accept the money, kicked him out of his store and forced him to give him cattle instead. The value of an adult goat was fixed at 1.50 Marks, that of

a cow at 50 Marks, and that of an ox at 60 Marks. Indeed, there have been cases in which cattle of excellent quality have been arbitrarily given an even lower value. . . .

"Traders are said to have repeatedly displayed insignia of authority—a sash or arm-band—to intimidate the Herero when recovering their debts. It seems this rumour can be traced back to one particular case which is still somewhat of a mystery. Schröder in Okandjose was entitled to vaccinate cattle and in that capacity used to wear an armband. He always maintained he had never worn it while collecting debts, but others claim to have seen him several times wearing the arm-band while driving cattle out of a kraal after the vaccination was over. However this may be, it certainly was common practice for one or two traders to enter a kraal, rifle at the ready, seize cattle to which they had ascribed a much too low value and say: 'This is cattle the Government has adjudged to me. If you offer resistance the police or the military will step in.' Another widespread method was for traders to throw reject goods off their wagon and then to claim payment later, brazenly maintaining: 'You've received the goods, so you must pay. . . .'

"The stock thus 'acquired' from the Herero over the last two years, the heyday of the cattle fraud, must be estimated at no less than 10,000 head, not counting the calves. The sum total of the 'outstanding debts' owed by Herero to traders or farmers either dead or alive comes to approximately half a million Marks, a figure which does not include claims that are downright fraudulent. Considering the unscrupulous way in which prices are fixed, the equivalent would have been at least 10,000 head of cattle if the repayment of the debts had been enforced."²⁷

What has been said here speaks volumes for the changes which South West Africa had undergone. While the cattle of the Herero and other peoples had once run into hundreds of thousands, the total figure was down to barely 50,000 by 1902. The census taken that year showed that approximately 80,000 Africans owned 45,910 head of cattle, whereas a few hundred German settlers, who had been virtually penniless ten years before, had built up their own herds to attain a total of 44,490 head.²⁸ Early in 1904 the property—movable and immovable—of the German farmers was valued at about 20 million Marks, the cattle alone representing a value of roughly 14 million marks.²⁹ This goes to show that even before 1904 the predatory policies of German imperialism had paid rich dividends for the settlers.

Notes

1 Captivi in the Reichstag, 1 March 1893, in KJb, Vol. 6 1893, p. 164.

2 *Ibid.*

3 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1483, pp. 7–8, Captain von François to Col. Dept., 25 March 1893.

4 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1483, pp. 39–40, Captain von François to Col. Dept., 6 April

1893. He goes on to say in his letter that "I hope to find someone to talk to at Hornkranz, all the more so as Hendrik Witbooi should have received word of my conversation with Samuel Isaak and will be looking forward to a meeting with me."
- 5 The mood among the Germans in South West Africa after the arrival of the reinforcements is described as follows in a contemporary source: "We heaved a sigh of relief because it seemed the moment had come to cast off a yoke we had been bearing so long. Our feeling was that the rule of the black and brown riff-raff was coming to an end and that we would at long last be able to settle accounts with them." Seidel, O., *Deutschlands erste Kolonie*, Hamburg, 1898, pp. 12 ff.
 - 6 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1483, pp. 39-40, Captain von François to the Ger. For. Off., 6 April 1893.
 - 7 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1483, pp. 41-8, Captain von François to the Ger. For. Off., 12 April 1893.
 - 8 The files contain an affidavit taken by Hendrik Witbooi's son, Klein Hendrik Witbooi, and sub-kaptein Keister Keister before the Resident Magistrate of Walvis Bay, John J. Cleverly. In it the Witboois put their losses at eight old men, two young lads (one of them being Hendrik Witbooi's youngest son who was about 12 years old) and 78 women and children. Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1483, pp. 67-70.
 - 9 Dove, Karl, *Südwestafrika, Kriegs- und Friedensbilder aus der ersten deutschen Kolonie*, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1896, pp. 183 ff. Dove even went so far as to maintain that the raid on Hornkranz was "morally justified". *Ibid.*
 - 10 *Kölnische Zeitung*, No. 492, 16 June 1893.
 - 11 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1483, pp. 52-4, François to the Ger. Col. Off., 25 April 1893.
 - 12 Dove, Karl, *Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, p. 187.
 - 13 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 185, and Bülow, F. J. von, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika. Drei Jahre im Lande Hendrik Witboois*, Berlin 1896, p. 291. The soldiers even carried away the Witboois' chickens "which were most welcome, as ours were reluctant to lay eggs."
 - 14 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1483, pp. 49-50, list of the objects captured at Hornkranz on 12 April 1893.
 - 15 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1483, pp. 41-8, François to the Col. Dept, 12 April 1893.
 - 16 Bülow, F. J. von, *op. cit.*, p. 289.
 - 17 Dove, Karl, *Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, p. 182.
 - 18 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1483, p. 26, Consulate-General in Cape Town to Ger. For. Off., 18 May 1893.
 - 19 *Ibid.*
 - 20 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1483, p. 28, Ger. For. Off. to Consulate-General in Cape Town, 19 May 1893. The despatch said, *inter alia*: "Your telegraphic account of the storming of Hornkranz has regrettably been inadequate."
 - 21 KJb, Vol. 7, 1894, p. 290.
 - 22 Gustav Voigts, Introduction to *Die Dagboek*, p. XII.
 - 23 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1484, p. 17, Hatzfeldt to Caprivi, 30 Aug. 1893.
 - 24 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1484, p. 19, Ger. For. Off. to Hatzfeldt, 3 Sept. 1893. On the other hand, it was felt that the British proposal did not go far enough. The German Foreign Office wished to see Hendrik Witbooi arrested as soon as he entered British territory.
 - 25 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1484, p. 25, Hatzfeldt to Col. Dept, 8 Sept. 1893.

- 26 "The *coup de main* at Horebis has left Windhoek without a link with Walvis Bay It is estimated that the *direct* war damage sustained by the white traders and settlers amounts to well over 100,000 Marks." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1484, pp. 103-4, Prof. R. Dove [Karl Dove's father - H. D.] to the Col. Dept., 8 Nov. 1893.
- 27 Cf. Bülow, F. J. von, *op. cit.*, p. 318.
- 28 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1485, p. 13, Col. Dept. to François, 21 Dec. 1893.
- 29 *Vossische Zeitung*, 9 Nov. 1893.
- 30 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1484, pp. 90-5, G. Schluckwerder to von Lilienthal, 24 July 1893.
- 31 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1485, pp. 68-9, E. Hermann to the Ger. SWA Co., 25 Nov. 1893.
- 32 KJb, Vol. 7, 1894, p. 287. The attacks on François in the Reichstag culminated in a speech delivered by the deputy Dr. Friedrich Hammacher, a member of the Praesidium of the Ger. SWA Co., which had suffered financially as a result of the loss of Kubub. Needless to say, it was not in this capacity that Hammacher addressed the Reichstag, but as a leader of the National Liberal Party. He declared bluntly that François was to blame for the situation obtaining in South West Africa: "He has grossly miscalculated the importance of his victory at Hornkranz I am not an advocate of extreme measures, but I repeat the concluding words of the deputy who spoke before me: The Budgetary Committee has arrived at the conclusion that Herr von François must be recalled." *Ibid.*, pp. 287.
- 33 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1485, pp. 44-5, François to Caprivi, 20 Nov. 1893.
- 34 *Ibid.*
- 35 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1485, p. 71, Col. Dept. to Rhenish Missionary Society in Barmen, 17 Jan. 1894.
- 36 In the same way as the Kharaskhoma Syndicate had persuaded the Bondelswarts in 1890 to sign a protection treaty with the German Reich, the Hanseatische Land-, Minen- und Handelsgesellschaft, a subsidiary of the British SWAC, began in 1893 to urge the Khauas to accept German "protection". But before such an arrangement could come about, the Khauas were subjugated by Governor Theodor Leutwein.
- 37 This account of the subjugation of the Khauas is based on two extensive reports sent by Leutwein to the Reich Chancellor: Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2164, pp. 6-15, Leutwein to Caprivi, 11 March 1894, and pp. 35-6, Leutwein to Caprivi, 8 July 1894.
- 38 DKBl, Vol. 5, 1894, p. 345.
- 39 Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, Berlin, 1906, p. 29.
- 40 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2164, pp. 35-6, Leutwein to Caprivi, 8 July 1894.
- 41 No detailed account of the fighting is given here. For details cf. „Über die letzten Kämpfe mit Hendrik Witbooi, in DKBl, Vol. 5, 1894, Suppl. to No. 24; Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur, op. cit.*, pp. 31 ff.; von Perbandt, *Feldzug gegen Hendrik Witbooi*, based on official sources, in Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1487, pp. 106-48; Cf. also Burgsdorff, Henning von, *Hendrik Witbooi*, in Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, pp. 65-80, printed in *Militärisches Wochenblatt*, No. 44, May 1895, and in Burgsdorff-Garath, Alhard von, *Der Hauptmann Henning von Burgsdorff*, Garath, 1947, pp. 24 ff.
- 42 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1486, p. 150, Leutwein's telegram to Caprivi, 14 Sept. 1894 (despatched from Las Palmas, 14 Oct. 1894). A civil servant at the Wilhelmstrasse added a triumphant "Hurrah" to Leutwein's telegram, a clear sign of the relief felt after the 18-month war against Hendrik Witbooi in which German prestige had been at stake.
- 43 One of those to recognize this was Nordensflycht, then Consul-General in Cape Town, who wrote in a private letter to Dr. Kayser: "I am afraid the peace with Witbooi will

come under criticism in Germany, notably in pro-colonial quarters. The telegram speaking of unconditional surrender has, strictly speaking, been largely refused by Leutwein's detailed report. Witbooi, far from surrendering unconditionally, has done so on highly favourable terms guaranteed in writing." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1487, pp. 43-5, Nordenflycht to Kayser, 30 Oct. 1894.

- 44 Cf. Hesse, Hermann, *Die Schutzverträge in Südwestafrika*, Berlin, 1905, pp. 46 ff.
- 45 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1487, pp. 12-14, Protection and friendship treaty between Major Leutwein and Kaptein Hendrik Witbooi, given in Hesse, Hermann, *op. cit.*, pp. 48 ff., and in *Denkschrift über Eingeborenen-Politik und Herero-Aufstand in Deutsch-Südwestafrika* (hereafter referred to as *Denkschrift*), Suppl. to DKBl, No. 25, 15 Dec. 1904, pp. 36 ff.
- 46 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1487, p. 24, missionary G. Viche to Leutwein, 23 Sept. 1894.
- 47 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1487, p. 31, Weiss to Syndikat für südwestafrikanische Siedlung in Berlin, 29 Sept. 1894.
- 48 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1487, pp. 35-42, François to the Imperial Naval Office, 19 Nov. 1894.
- 49 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1487, pp. 29-30, Marschall to Wilhelm II, 15 Nov. 1894. Somewhat later the affair even found its way into the press. The well-informed *Vossische Zeitung* reported on 7 March 1895: "It has been reliably learned that the Wilhelmstrasse is unwilling to give its official blessing to this peace treaty, thereby accepting responsibility for it, all the more so because there is widespread scepticism about whether Major von Leutwein's belief in Witbooi's reliability is justified. The present policy is to publish Leutwein's reports and to accept the state of affairs created by the peace as a *fait accompli* and to wait and see whether matters will remain as they are. Basically, the current arrangement in South West Africa is a provisional one, and responsibility for it rests with Major von Leutwein."
- 50 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1487, pp. 158-65, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 14 June 1895.
- 51 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1487, p. 168, memorandum.
- 52 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, p. 102, Burgsdorff to Leutwein, 9 March 1895.
- 53 It is important to note here that the Witboois numbered about 3,000 after the war and that famine conditions prevailed among them. On the question of what areas should be assigned to the Witboois, Burgsdorff said in response to their proposals that he did not oppose the idea of setting aside specified areas for them, but he added "it would be advisable to send a few tough settlers into the country. Whenever someone of such mould establishes himself in an area where there are but a handful of Hottentots, he will have the whip hand over them before long and the country will have inconspicuously passed into German hands in no time at all. Soon afterwards, as in the British colony, the Hottentots will have ceased to exist." Leutwein added the words "Quite right" to Burgsdorff's remarks. Imp. Col. Off. No. 2126, pp. 55-9, Burgsdorff to Leutwein, 29 Nov. 1894.
- 54 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, p. 144. The supplementary clause (9) to the 1894 treaty is given in Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, pp. 57 ff. It was further amended by implementing regulations enacted on 15 Jan. 1896. (Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2127, p. 7).
- 55 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, pp. 115-16, Burgsdorff to Leutwein, 1 May 1895.
- 56 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, pp. 131-2, Consulate-General in Cape Town to Col. Dept., 26 Nov. 1895.

- 57 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, p. 147, private letter of Burgsdorff to Leutwein, 14 Nov. 1895 (strictly confidential).
- 58 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, pp. 141-3, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 28 Nov. 1895.
- 59 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, p. 151, Leutwein's private letter, 30 Oct. 1895.
- 60 Burgsdorff wrote to Leutwein: "I have secretly enlisted as a kind of spy one of the kaptein's chief advisers, Jonas Josef, one of the signatories of the protection treaty. On the face of it, Jonas has no dealings with us whatever, but in secret he keeps Samuel - who is otherwise ill-informed because of his pro-German sentiments - or myself well posted on the activities surrounding Hendrik so that I will be quite aware of the reasons for any moves he might decide to make." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, p. 148, Burgsdorff to Leutwein, 16 Nov. 1895.
- 61 *Ibid.*
- 62 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2164, pp. 39-41, Report of Sergeant Bohr to District Chief von Heydebreck, 16 Sept. 1894.
- 63 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2164, pp. 55-60, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 13 Feb., 1895, and Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, pp. 65 ff.
- 64 *Ibid.*, p. 59.
- 65 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2152, pp. 96-97, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 26 Feb. 1895.
- 66 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2164, pp. 77, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 14 June 1895.
- 67 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1565, pp. 138-43, Gibson to Leutwein, 29 June 1894.
- 68 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1566, pp. 4-6, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 26 Feb. 1895.
- 69 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1566, pp. 39-46, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 2 April 1895.
- 70 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1565, pp. 138-43, Gibson to Leutwein, 29 June 1894 (with notes by Leutwein). Significantly enough, the KhS concealed the text of the land cession contract even from Kaptein Willem Christian so that the Kaptein in the end turned to the German district officer in Keetmanshoop, asking him for a copy of the contract. To this request Leutwein added the following remark: "The kaptein first lodged this complaint in March when he discussed the matter with me in Warmbad. He suspects, with some justice, that the whole thing might be a trap." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1566, p. 92, Willem Christian to the District Officer of Keetmanshoop, 18 Sept. 1895.
- 71 Cf. Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
- 72 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, p. 68, Nels to Caprivi, 11 Nov. 1890.
- 73 There is no written evidence that François intervened in Samuel Maharero's election, but cf. Isle, J., *Die Herero. Ein Beitrag zur Landes-, Volks- und Missionskunde*, Gütersloh, 1906, p. 217.
- 74 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1486, pp. 85-86, Leutwein to Caprivi, 17 June 1894.
- 75 Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, p. 60.
- 76 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1486, pp. 85-86, Leutwein to Caprivi, 17 June 1894.
- 77 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, p. 101, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 13 Dec. 1894.
- 78 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, p. 103, Treaty between Leutwein and Samuel Herero concerning the southern boundary of Hereroland, 6 Dec. 1894, published in DKBI, Vol. 5, 1895, pp. 163 ff.

- 79 Imp. Col. Off. File No 2100, pp. 117-24, Lindequist to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 24 May 1895.
- 80 *Ibid.*
- 81 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, pp. 125-7, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 14 June 1895.
- 82 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, pp. 129-32, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 3 July 1895 published in DKBl, Vol. 6, 1895, p. 489.
- 83 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, p. 135. Supplementary provision to the treaty of 16 Jan. 1895, 1 July 1895. It should be added by way of explanation that the original treaty fixing the southern boundary of Hereroland dated from 6 Dec. 1894. The treaty signed on 16 Jan. 1895 was a protocol drawn up after a mounted patrol had inspected the southern boundary of Hereroland. (Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, pp. 112-13, published in DKBl, Vol. 6, 1895, pp. 165 ff.).
- 84 Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, op. cit., p. 87.
- 85 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, pp. 141-42, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 29 Aug. 1895, published in slightly revised form in DKBl, Vol. 6, 1895, pp. 621 ff.
- 86 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1588, p. 63, Leutwein to Kayser, 29 Aug. 1895. Six weeks later Leutwein wrote about him in a letter to the Imperial Chancellor: "He has rendered me many good services while I was en route. At Outjo where I discussed the Herero question with him once again, I told him quite frankly that I could believe in a peaceful solution only if the Herero changed their habits and attitudes completely, adding that I hoped to accomplish this with his aid. But if the worst came to the worst, I said, he and his followers would be left in peace, a prospect that prompted Samuel to assure me anew of his undying friendship. For the rest, we would whenever possible, try to pacify any disputes provoked by his people through prompt and concerted action. Our journey already afforded us an opportunity to do so, and I must admit that Samuel is beginning to assert his authority as Supreme Chief in the most forceful manner. At any rate, his prestige has been greatly enhanced by his taking part in my expedition." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, pp. 143-6, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 12 Oct. 1895.
- 87 Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, op. cit., p. 77.
- 88 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1588, pp. 51-8, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 29 Aug. 1895.
- 89 *Ibid.* Leutwein, who is often described as an "opponent" of the land companies, stated in the same letter that the cession of land acquired by the SWAC was the best land in SWA and noted that he was pleased "that it will pass into the hands of a private company whose activities so far have reflected the greatest credit on it".
- 90 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, pp. 60-4, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 13 Feb. 1895.
- 91 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, pp. 129-32, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 3 July 1895.
- 92 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, pp. 156-65, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 31 Oct. 1895.
- 93 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, pp. 166-7, Leutwein to the missionary G. Viche, 22 Oct. 1895.
- 94 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, p. 156.
- 95 This can be seen from the following marginal note: "How surprising that L. should change his policy so abruptly and become a chauvinist!" Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, p. 165.

- 96 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, pp. 171-3. Form a report of Dr. Hartmann to the SWAC, 8. Aug. 1895.
- 97 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1534/2, pp. 76-77, von Schelling's memorandum, 8. Jan. 1896. Xf. also the minutes of a meeting of the Supervisory Council of the Ger SWA Co. held on 8. Jan. 1896, in: Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1534/2, pp. 79-83.
- 98 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2100, pp. 175-8, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 19 Nov. 1895. Leutwein is wrong in stating in his book that the cattle theft occurred in early 1896. Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, op. cit., p. 93.
- 99 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2101, pp. 5-7, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 25 Dec. 1895.
- 100 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2101, pp. 16-26, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 29 Jan. 1896.
- 101 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2101, pp. 45-50, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 10 Feb. 1896.
- 102 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2101, pp. 16-26, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 29. Jan. 1896.
- 103 Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, op. cit., p. 95.
- 104 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2101, pp. 16-26, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 29 Jan. 1896. In his book Leutwein also mentioned his threat that a war "would inevitably end in the destruction of one of the belligerents - and this could only be the Herero." Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, op. cit., p. 94.
- 105 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2101, pp. 45-50, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 10 Feb. 1896. The report went on to say: "This episode in itself is less a cause for concern than the fact that the Herero cattle are now making their way to the north whereas our own traders, who are not allowed to sell ammunition, appear to be at a disadvantage vis-à-vis the Portuguese. There was already an acute shortage of meat in Windhoek recently when a war seemed imminent."
- 106 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2101, p. 10, Leutwein to Kambohe, 17 Sept. 1895.
- 107 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2101, p. 8, missionary Rautanen to Leutwein, 21 Oct. 1895. Cf. also Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, pp. 172 ff.
- 108 "Since I have no doubt in my mind that, barring some unforeseeable event, Samuel would side with us in the event of war, we have already managed to drive a wedge into the Herero colossus. We would only have to confront part of that numerous people and could make our contingency plans accordingly." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2101, pp. 45-50, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 10 Feb. 1896.
- 109 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2101, pp. 54-56, memorandum (drawn up by Consul Zimmermann) regarding the Herero question, 28 March 1896.
- 110 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2101, p. 36, minutes of a settlers' meeting held on 20 Jan. 1896.
- 111 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2101, pp. 75-76, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 20 March 1896.
- 112 Cf. 'Skizze des Siedlungsgebietes der Siedlungsgesellschaft für Deutsch-Südwestafrika', in DKZ, NF, Vol. 9, 1896, Suppl. to No. 19.
- 113 Kahaka was the eldest son of Tjetjo's first wife.
- 114 Schapera, J., 'Notes on some Herero Genealogies', in *Communications from the School of African Studies*, Cape Town, New Series, No. 14, October 1945, p. 11, quoted from Schlosser, Katesa, 'Die Herero im Britisch-Betschuanaland-Protektorat und ein Besuch in einer ihrer Siedlungen: Newe-le-tau', *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Vol. 80, 2, 1955, p. 205.

- 115 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, pp. 38/40, Witbooi's testimony, 26 May 1896.
- 116 Cf. Isle, J., *Die Herero*, op. cit., pp. 219 and 301.
- 117 Leutwein noted that at the beginning of the uprising the whole of Okahandja (the centre of Hereroland) was looking in the direction of Gibeon (Hendrik Witbooi's residence). (Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, op. cit., p. 99). In order to intimidate Samuel Maharero's opponents in Okahandja, Leutwein ordered Major Mueller to lead a military force to Gross-Barmen "as a warning against Okahandja, not to caution the Supreme Chief, but rather to strengthen his position towards his subjects. In addition, I left it to Major Mueller's discretion to detain the old Riarua, the head of the rival faction and father-in-law of the rebellious Nikodemus. Also, I asked the Supreme Chief to keep order in Okahandja, Waterberg and Otjimbingwe, but to place a few of his men at my disposal as a token of Herero support for a campaign against Nikodemus." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1488, pp. 67-74, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 14 April 1896.
- 118 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1488 and 1489; Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, op. cit., pp. 97 ff.; Schwabe, Kurd, *Mit Schwert und Pflug in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, second edition, Berlin, 1904, pp. 286 ff., DKBl, Vol. 7, 1896, pp. 373 ff., 411, 446 ff., 477 ff., 490 ff., and DKZ, NF, Vol. 9 1896, Supplement to No. 19 and pp. 273 ff.
- 119 Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, op. cit., p. 111.
- 120 DKZ, NF, Vol. 9, 1896, p. 155.
- 121 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1488, p. 189, memorandum dated 3 July 1896. Not surprisingly, this murder of defenceless prisoners is not mentioned in any official report. The Col. Dept. learned about the incident from Dr. Scharlach who had been informed about it by Dr. Hartmann, the representative of the SWAC in SWA, in a letter from Omaruru dated 4 May 1896.
- 122 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, pp. 33-7, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 4 July 1896.
- 123 Cf. Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, op. cit., p. 111, and Schwabe, Kurd, *Schwert und Pflug*, op. cit., p. 309. Presumably, the 3,000 head of livestock captured are the same as were mentioned in the 19 May 1896 edition of the *Süd-Afrikanische Zeitung*: "2,000 head of cattle and 900 head of small stock have been captured so far, and a certain number have already been sold at a fixed price."
- 124 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, pp. 15-23, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 8 June 1896.
- 125 *Ibid.*
- 126 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, pp. 73-8, Major Mueller to Leutwein, 10 Feb. 1897. Mueller also mentioned in his report that "some measure of force" had to be applied to take the cattle away.
- 127 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, pp. 70-2, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 14 April 1897.
- 128 Cf. *Der Reichsbote*, 23 April 1904. The stolen cattle were then sold to German settlers at a very low price. Cf. eg. DKZ, NF, Vol. 9, 1896, p. 344, which mentions a cattle auction held at Seeis. Leutwein was also present "to supervise the division of the spoils." Gustav Voigts, Introduction to *Die Dagboek*, p. xxi.
- 129 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, pp. 33-7, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 4 July 1896.
- 130 Cf. *ibid.*
- 131 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, pp. 33-7, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 4 July 1896.

- 132 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1488, pp. 54-7, Marschall to Leutwein, 29 May 1896.
- 133 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, pp. 54-9, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 13 Oct. 1896.
- 134 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2101, pp. 78-83, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 20 July 1896.
- 135 *Ibid.*
- 136 *Ibid.*
- 137 Cf. DKZ, NF, Vol. 8, 1895, p. 18, and *Berliner Tageblatt*, 8 Nov. 1902.
- 138 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1654, p. 39.
- 139 Drechsler, Horst, 'Deutsche Versuche, das deutsch-englische Abkommen von 1898 über die portugiesischen Kolonien zu realisieren', in *ZfG*, Vol. 9, 1961, pp. 1621 ff.
- 140 Cecil Rhodes was still convinced in 1895 that the German Empire would give up South West Africa sooner or later. The DKZ quoted him as saying in the Cape Parliament: "One day it will dawn upon the Germans how pointless it is to cling to a barren country whose only seaport belongs to Britain. Some German minister will then come forward and say: 'Let us put an end to the whole thing, this is an untenable situation in which no power on earth can hold its own.' At present, to be sure, with the country in the grip of a colonial fever, no German Government can afford to abandon any colonial possession, but this is bound to change." DKZ, NF, Vol. 8, 1895, p. 233.
- 141 The Jameson Raid, and specifically the role of Joseph Chamberlain, are the subject of some commendable studies published in the 1950s. Cf. especially van der Poel, Jean, *The Jameson Raid*, London, 1951; Drus, Ethel, 'The Question of Imperial Complicity in the Jameson Raid', in *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 68 1953, pp. 582 ff.; Drus, Ethel, 'A Report on the Papers of Joseph Chamberlain relating to the Jameson Raid and the Inquiry', in *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, Vol. 24, 1951, pp. 33 ff. In contrast, Pakenham, Elizabeth, *Jameson's Raid*, London, 1959, is a work of no consequence.
- 142 Cf. Raphael, Lois A. C., *The Cape-to-Cairo Dream. A Study in British Imperialism*, New York, 1936.
- 143 Cf. Bülow, Bernhard von, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, Vol. 1, Berlin, 1930, pp. 289 ff. Very remarkably, it was Davis, Chairman of the SWAC, who arranged this visit. (Cf. Eckardstein, Hermann Freiherr von, *Lebenserinnerungen und politische Denkwürdigkeiten*, Vol. 1, Leipzig 1919, pp. 314 ff.).
- 144 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1658, pp. 69-72, Railway agreement of 28 Oct. 1899 between the German Government and Cecil Rhodes.
- 145 Cf. in particular Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1684, pp. 72-6, Col. Dept (von Buchka) to the State Secretary of the Imperial Treasury, 5 March 1900.
- 146 Cf. Rohrbach, Paul, *Dernburg und die Südwestafrikaner*, Berlin, 1911, p. 274.
- 147 Cf. Meyer, H., ed., *Das deutsche Kolonialreich*, Vol. 2, Leipzig/Vienna, 1914, p. 236.
- 148 Cf. Irle, J., *Die Herero*, *op. cit.*, p. 301.
- 149 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1218, pp. 111-12, Lindequist (deputy administrator) to Col. Dept, 27 April 1898.
- 150 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2101, p. 122, Lindequist to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 14 Oct. 1897.
- 151 Cf. Rohrbach, Paul, *Dernburg und die Südwestafrikaner*, p. 276.
- 152 *Hamburgischer Korrespondent*, No. 481, 14 Oct. 1897. Cf. also DKZ, NF, Vol. 10, 1897, pp. 222 ff.

- 153 Cf. Irlé, J., *Die Herero*, *op. cit.*, p. 302.
- 154 Cf. e.g. DKBl, Vol. 8, 1897, p. 265.
- 155 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, p. 144, Report of von Burgsdorff, 9 Oct. 1897, published in DKBl, Vol. 9, 1898, p. 5, in a version omitting the crucial sentence quoted here.
- 156 Apparently, Leutwein gave a wildly exaggerated figure to excuse the German defeat. In the book he published later he reduced the number to 60. Cf. Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, p. 142.
- 157 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, pp. 87-90, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 26 July 1897.
- 158 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, pp. 91-3, Bunsen's report on the engagement near Kaudaus (Xamsib Kluft) against the Afrikaner Hottentots, 5 July 1897.
- 159 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, pp. 87-90, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 26 July 1897.
- 160 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, pp. 105-6, Leutwein to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 22 Aug. 1897.
- 161 *Ibid.*
- 162 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, p. 130, Lindequist to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 28 Sept. 1897.
- 163 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, p. 131, Burgsdorff to the Imperial Administration in Windhoek, 27 Sept. 1897. Burgsdorff also announced in this report: "It is my intention to pass judgement on the prisoners here [in Ukamas - H. D.] ... in a few days' time."
- 164 Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, p. 143.
- 165 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, p. 165-67, Hartmann to District Officer Lieutenant Ziegler, 13 Dec. 1897.
- 166 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, p. 163, Hartmann to the head of the Col. Dept., 13 Dec. 1897.
- 167 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1489, pp. 159-60, Lindequist to the Col. Dept., n. d.
- 168 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1490, pp. 169-71, Lindequist to the Col. Dept., 10 April 1898.
- 169 Cf. Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, p. 155.
- 170 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1491, pp. 21-2, District Officer Lieutenant Reiss to the Administration in Windhoek, 4 May 1899.
- 171 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1491, p. 23, Leutwein to Lieutenant Reiss, 11 May 1899.
- 172 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1491, pp. 29-32, Leutwein to the Col. Dept., 16 Sept. 1899.
- 173 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1491, p. 93, Nikolas Swart to Leutwein, 4 Feb. 1901.
- 174 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1491, p. 82, Report of Lieutenant von Lekow, 4 Feb. 1901.
- 175 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1491, pp. 91-2, Leutwein to Col. Dept., 22 March 1901.
- 176 *Ibid.*
- 177 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1657, p. 118, Hartmann to Otavigesellschaft, 13 Dec. 1901.
- 178 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1657, pp. 122-6, Expert opinion by Golinelli, 1 Feb. 1902, on Dr. Hartmann's report regarding the construction of a railway in Ovamboland, 13 Dec. 1901.
- 179 Cf. Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, p. 441.
- 180 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2153, pp. 101-2, Report of Lieutenant Jobst to the District Officer of Keetmanshoop, 24 Oct. 1903; Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2153, p. 52, Anonymous letter to the editor of *Die Woche*, Berlin, 1 Nov. 1903, and Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, pp. 439 ff.
- 181 In a private letter to Golinelli, the Col. Dept. official responsible for South West Africa,

- Leutwein wrote, *inter alia*: "The Bondelswarts issue has flared up all of a sudden – an occurrence that had seemed very remote indeed. It must also have come as a total surprise to our people in the south. And again, we are not wholly blameless in this matter." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2153, p. 47, Leutwein to Golinelli, 31 Oct. 1903.
- 182 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2153, pp. 98–100, Leutwein to the Col. Dept., 6 Nov. 1903.
- 183 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2153, p. 53.
- 184 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2153, pp. 54–5, Col. Dept. (Golinelli) to Leutwein, 20 Dec. 1903 (this letter was not sent off).
- 185 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2153, p. 52.
- 186 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2153, p. 70.
- 187 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2154, p. 142, von Kageneck to Leutwein, 27 May 1904.
- 188 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2152, p. 152.
- 189 *Berliner Tageblatt*, 12 April 1904. This extensive report was drawn up by a certain K. Otto who also penned a 42-page account entitled "The Campaign against the Bondelswarts: A Lost Campaign" which was found among the records. Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2154, pp. 65–85.
- 190 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2153, pp. 61–2, Metternich (London) to the Ger. For. Off., 21 Dec. 1903.
- 191 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2153, p. 119, Leutwein to the High Command of the Protective Force, 4 Dec. 1903. Cf. also Erffa, Burkhardt Freiherr von, *Reise- und Kriegsbilder von Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, Halle 1905, pp. 41, and 45.
- 192 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2154, p. 6, Agreement between Captain von Fiedler and the Bondelswarts, 27 Dec. 1903.
- 193 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2154, pp. 4–5, Leutwein to the High Command of the Protective Force, 12 Jan. 1904.
- 194 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2154, pp. 11–12, Leutwein to Fiedler, 3 Jan. 1904.
- 195 DSWAZ, No. 11, 1904.
- 196 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2154, pp. 27–8, Lindequist to Bülow, 15 Feb. 1904. Soon afterward Lindequist succeeded Leutwein as Governor of South West Africa.
- 197 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2154, pp. 53–4, Leutwein to the Col. Dept., 4 April 1904.
- 198 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2164, pp. 6–15, Leutwein to Caprivi, 11 March 1894.
- 199 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1218, pp. 26–7, Leutwein to Caprivi, 29 Oct. 1894.
- 200 Prior to the uprisings, the size of Hereroland was estimated at approx. 100,000 to 150,000 square kilometres. Cf. e.g. Itle, J., *Die Herero*, *op. cit.*, p. 9, who speaks of 154,000 sq. kms, while Rohrbach, Paul, in *Dernburg und die Südwestafrikaner*, *op. cit.*, p. 23, gives a figure of 100,000 to 120,000 sq. kms, which seems to be more realistic. There are no reliable data on the original size of Hereroland.
- 201 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1218, pp. 111–12, Lindequist to the Col. Dept., 27 April 1898.
- 202 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2126, pp. 121–7, Leutwein's report on "The Historical Development of the Protectorate and its Relevance for the Herero Uprising."
- 203 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1200, pp. 41–2, The Administration in Windhoek to the Col. Dept., 16 Aug. 1902.
- 204 The size of their holdings was as follows:
- | | | |
|---|---------|-----------------|
| 1. German South West Africa Company | approx. | 135,000 sq. kms |
| 2. Siedlungsgesellschaft für Südwestafrika | | 20,000 sq. kms |
| 3. Hansratische Land-, Minen- und Handelsgesellschaft | | 10,000 sq. kms |
| 4. Kaoko Land- und Minengesellschaft | approx. | 105,000 sq. kms |

5. (British) South West Africa Company 13,000 sq. kms
 6. South African Territories approx. 12,000 sq. kms
- Accurate figures were obtained later for the German South West Africa Company, the Kaoko Land- und Minengesellschaft and the South African Territories. These were, respectively, 133,250, 99,900 and 10,962 square kilometres.
- 205 Cf. Rohrbach, Paul, *Dernburg und die Südwestafrikaner*, *op. cit.*, p. 299.
- 206 Cf. Mission Inspector Dr. Schreiber to Dr. Stuebel (head of the Col. Dept.) 12 Feb. 1901, published in *Denkschrift*, p. 61. The way in which the transfer of land from the Africans to the German settlers is described in the *Denkschrift* under the heading "Territorial Issue" creates the impression that it was just a question of the Herero, and especially Samuel Maharero, dissipating their land and the Government doing its utmost to curb such irresponsible behaviour.
- 207 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1218, p. 19. Mission Inspector Dr. Schreiber to von Richthofen (head of the Col. Dept.), 26 Jan. 1897.
- 208 Dr. Schreiber to Dr. Stuebel, 21 April 1902, published in *Denkschrift*, p. 66.
- 209 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1218, pp. 142-3, Leutwein to the Col. Dept., 18. April 1901.
- 210 Schreiber to Stuebel, 14 Oct. 1901, published in *Denkschrift*, p. 63.
- 211 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1207, pp. 10-11, Burgsdorff to Leutwein, 1. Nov. 1896.
- 212 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1207, p. 9, Lindequist to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 12 Sept. 1897. Cf. also Burgsdorff-Garath, Alhard von, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
- 213 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, pp. 106-10, Leutwein to the Col. Dept, 14 March 1904. To the sentence quoted, Golinelli added the following remark: "This has been my view all along."
- 214 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1218, pp. 142-3, Leutwein to the Col. Dept., 18 April 1901.
- 215 *Ibid.*
- 216 Leutwein to the Col. Dept., Sept. 1904, published in *Denkschrift*, p. 79.
- 217 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2116, pp. 111-12, missionary Diehl to Leutwein, n. d.
- 218 Cf. Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, p. 350, who gives a figure of 500,000. Seidel, O., *op. cit.*, p. 25, estimated that there were over 300,000 head of cattle in South West Africa.
- 219 Cf. Wegner, E. W., *Aus Deutsch-Afrika! Tagebuch-Briefe eines jungen Deutschen aus Angola Pequena (1882-1884)*, Leipzig, 1885, p. 13, Die deutschen Kolonialgebiete, No. 1.
- 220 Cf. Bülow, F. J. von, *op. cit.*, p. 361.
- 221 Cf. Gustav Voigts, Introduction to *Die Dagboek*, pp. X ff.
- 222 Cf. Dove, Karl, *Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, pp. 251 ff., who provided an instructive account of such an "expedition".
- 223 *Ibid.*, p. 280.
- 224 Cf. Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, pp. 559 ff. Indicating the reasons for this move, the Governor wrote: "It was not love of the native population that prompted the Administration to take this step ... but a concern for the life and welfare of the whites living amidst the Herero." *Ibid.*, p. 247.
- 225 Cf. *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 27 Jan. 1904.
- 226 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, pp. 111-12. Report of District Officer Zürn (Okahandja), 5 March 1904. In his diary, Paul Rohrbach gave the following comment: "The shameless practice of blackmailing the Herero into ceding large chunks of land, surrendering their cattle, recognizing debts, etc., is often little more than blatant usury or, worse still, thinly

disguised robbery of the worst kind. More recently, there have been reports that some traders whom everyone here knows by name and who have virtually begun to make the 'collection' of debts their business are now in the habit of simply driving the cattle 'owed' to them out of the kraals, rifle at the ready, a cow worth 150 Marks being appraised at 50 or 75 Marks." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, p. 156, Entry made in Rohrbach's diary in Nov. 1903.

227 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2115, pp. 107-9, Rohrbach to Leutwein, 28 May 1904.

228 Cf. Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op cit.*, p. 367.

229 Cf. Rohrbach, Paul, *Dernburg und die Südwestafrikaner*, *op cit.*, pp. 315 ff.

CHAPTER III

The Herero Uprising (1904)

The Causes of the Uprising

To the total surprise of the Germans, a great uprising of the Herero broke out on 12 January 1904. The Herero rose as one man under the leadership of their Supreme Chief Samuel Maharero, who thus reversed the ill-conceived policy he had pursued thus far in a turn-about due largely to the pressure brought upon him by the lesser chiefs.

There can be no doubt about the reasons behind the insurrection. It was the systematic expropriation of the Herero and their consequent status of rightlessness that impelled them to their national uprising against German imperialism. They neither could nor would live any longer under these conditions. They preferred to die arms in hand rather than wait in resignation until their last possessions had been taken away from them.

Paradoxically, measures such as the establishment of reserves and the July 1903 statute of limitations on contracts, designed to remedy abuses, had the opposite effect. The creation of reserves made it clear to the Herero that the amount of land still left to them was dwindling rapidly while the decree establishing a 12-month time limit for the enforcement of claims on Africans caused traders to press even harder for the repayment of their debts. These measures were factors that hastened the outbreak of the rebellion.

Another factor acting as a catalyst was the construction of the Otavi railway.¹ The building of the railway line from Swakopmund to Windhoek, which affected "only" the southern part of Hereroland, had soon left no land suitable for farming anywhere along its length. Even more worrying for the Herero was the projected construction of the Otavi line, which was to cut right across Hereroland. The Otavigesellschaft, the company which was financing the undertaking, demanded that the Herero cede not only the land directly required for the construction of the railway, but also a 20-kilometre-wide strip on either side of the track plus all water rights within this area.² In direct negotiations with Samuel Maharero, Governor Theodor Leutwein finally persuaded the Supreme Chief to give up free of charge the land needed for laying the track.³ But Maharero was not prepared to make any further concessions. In a letter to the banker Adolph von Hansemann, Leutwein wrote about the outcome of his talks with Maharero: "It will not be

possible to obtain a cession of land on the scale envisaged by the company. The kapteins have even asked that the natives inhabiting areas that would be crossed by the railway line should not be forced to evacuate these areas altogether, but only as far as is necessary. The experience gathered in building the government railway suggests, however, that the natives, who seem to abhor life in proximity to major routes of communication, will in time withdraw from the areas in question of their own free will, provided they find adequate water supplies elsewhere."⁴ At any event, it was not difficult for the Herero to foresee that the construction of the Otavi line would set off an unprecedented rush of German settlers to Hereroland.⁵

A serious problem that has so far gone unmentioned but that went a long way towards bringing matters to a head was the state of rightlessness to which the Africans had been reduced by the Germans. Displaying a blatantly racist attitude, the Germans described the Africans as baboons and treated them accordingly.⁶ The gamut of the high-handed measures they inflicted on them ranged from doses of "paternal care" (i. e. whipping)⁷ to plain murder. To explain such outrageous behaviour they often pleaded diminished responsibility due to "tropical frenzy", a term specifically invented for this purpose.⁸ When a German was put on trial—an event of extremely rare occurrence—the judge would, as a rule, dismiss the charges or impose very light sentences. As a matter of principle, courts tended to call in doubt the credibility of African witnesses. Indeed, these were the days when the German Colonial League demanded that the testimony of seven Africans should be deemed equivalent to that of one white man.⁹ Deprived of all their rights, Africans had the feeling of being slaves in their own country.¹⁰

To make matters worse, the Germans completely ignored the solemn promise they had made in Article 3 of the so-called treaty of protection and friendship with the Herero that they would respect the latter's habits and customs. Governor Theodor Leutwein believed that "the bulk of the whites here were ignorant of the protection treaty with the Herero."¹¹ The Herero, for their part, had not forgotten the provisions of the agreement, but with the Germans persistently violating them, they decided in January 1904 that they, too, were no longer bound by the terms of the treaty. The Herero were full of complaints that the Germans were flouting their customs and habits and raping their women and young girls. Although this was not denied by the Germans, it is symptomatic that not a single case of rape came before a court in South West Africa before the Herero rising.¹² The Germans looked upon such offences as mere peccadilloes.

A graphic description of what happened when an African had the temerity to protest against the rape of his wife was given by *Berner Tagwacht*, a Social Democratic paper published in Switzerland: "The overseer of the kraal, a German, and two of his cronies had locked themselves in with the wife of a native, probably after having administered a heavy dose of schnapps to her. Her husband, who had got wind of the matter, rushed to their house, hammering at the door and demanding the release of his wife. Thereupon one of these heroes came out to give the

black man a good hiding, a practice which, albeit forbidden, is fairly commonplace here. However, the black man offered resistance and, after having himself struck a blow, fled into his hut. The whites, blazing with anger, dragged him out and maltreated him, subsequently bundling him off to the police station where he was given fifty lashes into the bargain for having assaulted a white man."¹³ This report, which a Swiss railway worker had sent to the paper, makes it abundantly clear why no case of rape was ever brought before a court in South West Africa.

That the Africans were completely at the mercy of the Germans is illustrated even more vividly by the following two episodes in which two of them were murdered by Germans who were then given extremely light sentences. The first case involved Prince Prosper von Arenberg, a cousin of Prince Franz von Arenberg, an influential deputy in the Reichstag and a member of the Centre Party. Prosper von Arenberg, who while serving as an army lieutenant in Germany had been convicted of having maltreated one of his men, was packed off to South West Africa late in 1898 so that the scandal might blow over. After his arrival there he was named chief of the military post at Epukiro by Governor Leutwein. In this capacity the Prince was apparently making every effort to live up to his unsavoury reputation. In September 1899 he let it be known that he was on the track of a band of smugglers. He suspected that an African by the name of Willi Cain was planning to cross the border with his people and cattle. For this reason he arrested Cain on 24 September. What happened afterwards is related in an official note prepared by the Colonial Department for the Reich Chancellor: "Cain denied the charges, whereupon Arenberg had him manacled and pummelled him on the face. After the shackles had been removed, Arenberg warned Cain that he would be shot if he stepped over a chalk circle drawn around him. In the afternoon Arenberg took his prisoner to Stampriet. All the men of Cain's *werf* were disarmed, and Cain's father and two other men were detained. After Arenberg had drunk schnapps with Cain and told him about his hunting exploits, he lay down to sleep with Cain at his side. At 4 o'clock in the morning Arenberg drew Sergeant Wieberger and Cain aside, leading them 150 steps away from the camp. There he talked to Cain in English and informed Wieberger that Cain had confessed everything. Prince Arenberg claims that he then allowed Cain to flee in order to spare him the long term of imprisonment he was allegedly facing, but also told him that he would order shots to be fired at him. Cain then indeed ran away and Wieberger, on Arenberg's orders, shot him in the right thigh. Cain collapsed, mumbling a few words, after which Arenberg took out his revolver and shot him through the nape of the neck. Prince Arenberg and Wieberger went back to the camp to return with cavalryman Baumann five minutes later. Meanwhile Cain had crawled underneath a bush, but Arenberg dragged him away from there, Cain managing to ask him with ebbing strength why he had been shot. Arenberg then said to Wieberger: 'I have no choice now, he must die', and ordered him to fix his bayonet and stab Cain to death. Arenberg then seized Cain by the shoulder and pointed out the region of the heart to Wieberger who plunged his bayonet

into his victim's chest. Cain sank to the ground, received two more stabs from Wieberger and, when there was still life in him, Arenberg inserted a ramrod into the nape of his victim's neck, poking it into his brain. Later on, Arenberg ordered NCO Stoll and Sergeant Wieberger to finish off the other prisoners, but this order was not carried out."¹⁴

The incident provoked such an upsurge of indignation that Arenberg was sentenced to 10 months in prison by a court-martial in Windhoek. There was a public outcry in Germany against this scandalously lenient sentence, especially in the Social Democratic press, so that it was eventually quashed. After a retrial in Germany, Arenberg was condemned to death in September 1900. The Kaiser commuted the sentence to 15 years of penal servitude, later changed to imprisonment. After the outbreak of the Herero uprising, however, Arenberg's crime was no longer considered so reprehensible among ruling class circles in Germany. After all, he had done nothing more than the military were doing at the moment. So the case was brought up once again. This time the court, backed up by expert opinions from eight medical specialists and the scientific council of the Kaiser Wilhelm Academy, acquitted Arenberg on the grounds that he had been "insane" at the time the crime had been committed. The upshot was that the noble lord served no more than four years and two months of the sentence he had received.

Another episode that caused strong feelings among the Herero occurred in 1903. A German trader by the name of Dietrich had asked the son of the Herero Chief Zacharias of Otjimbingwe to take him to Karibib in his wagon. On their way there, while they were resting at night, a shot rang out. The chief's son jumped to his feet and saw Dietrich darting away. Then he found that his wife had been killed and his newborn baby wounded. Bourgeois sources usually attribute this incident to a "misunderstanding" or to a fit of "tropical frenzy". But this is some way from the truth. As subchief Daniel Kariko later testified under oath, Dietrich killed the woman because she had refused to be unfaithful to her husband.¹⁵ After giving alcohol to the man he made amorous advances to his wife. When these were rejected he shot her.

The murderer was acquitted of charges of manslaughter but a court of appeal overturned this judgment and sentenced him to three years imprisonment. That was shortly before the rebellion. After its outbreak it was decided that men with a record such as his would be able to render good service. So he was released from jail and made a non-commissioned officer, in which capacity he could go on killing Herero.

Only the two most publicized cases have been quoted here. Indeed, the files of the Imperial Colonial Office contain long lists of Germans who committed acts of violence against Africans in the period from 1901 to 1904. In all the cases recorded there was a glaring discrepancy between the punishment awarded and the severity of the crime. The excessive leniency shown by the courts even prompted Leutwein to observe that "the reason why so many cases were dismissed is that all the witnesses were natives and the courts did not necessarily lend much cre-

dence to their testimony."¹⁶ Another conspicuous feature of the lists is that the names of particular wrongdoers occur relatively frequently. The name of the farmer A. Denker, for example, figures four times on the same list. In 1902 he faced charges of maltreatment before the Imperial District Court in Swakopmund, but the lawsuit was still pending several years later. In 1903 he appeared in court on a charge of unlawful constraint, but the case was dismissed. Later that year he was charged with attempted coercion, but according to the files the case had not yet been decided. And, finally, in 1904 he was accused of murder and homicide, but the proceedings were quashed.¹⁷

As can be seen from the records of the Reich Colonial Office, Germans even went so far as to maltreat tribal chiefs. One report notes: "Assa Riarua, subchief of the Herero, was flogged until the blood ran." The offender was a master baker by the name of Schäfer. As regards the penalty imposed, the report stated laconically: "Settlement out of court arranged by the Governor in February 1901. 20 Marks paid in compensation".¹⁸

What happened to any German who refused to participate in wrongdoing against Africans and even criticized such practices is illustrated by the Groeneveld affair. It had come to the notice of Groeneveld, a trader in Bethanie district, that a non-commissioned officer named Kossack had tormented an African to death in September 1901. The trader notified the district officer, Baron von Stempel, of the matter and told him that he had sent a letter to the daily *Tägliche Rundschau* informing the editor of the incident. He said he had told the paper that if they were not interested in his report they should pass it on to the Social Democratic organ *Vorwärts*. Groeneveld had taken these precautions to ensure that Kossack would not escape punishment.

In response, the district officer imposed a boycott on Groeneveld to bring about his economic ruin. Two directives from the Colonial Department that the boycott be lifted forthwith did nothing to change the trader's situation. Ultra-rightist elements who felt that bankruptcy was not enough went one step further and instituted legal proceedings against him. And so, to top it all, Groeneveld was sentenced to five years hard labour in May 1903 by judges who had succumbed to the wave of chauvinistic feeling. But this was going too far. The Groeneveld affair had already created such a stir that the judgement was quashed in appellate proceedings.¹⁹ As for Kossack, the murderer, he was never put on trial.

Bourgeois writers have never openly admitted the real causes behind the Herero insurrection. Instead, they have tended to push other factors into the foreground. The factors cited as alleged causes of the uprising range from the "blood-thirstiness" of the Herero to "racial strife". The latter argument is particularly absurd because the Herero spared Britons, Boers, missionaries, and the women and children of the German settlers. Most writers blame the nefarious activities of the traders, the statute of limitations and the projected creation of reserves, but all of these were only contributory factors. One writer even quoted the "weakness of the garrison force"²⁰ as the root cause of the Herero rising. Obviously, Rohrbach was not so

wrong, after all, in stating that "those who expressed their views about the motives involved concentrated above all on listing and criticizing insignificant and extraneous circumstances."²¹

There was some method in this, however. Laying bare the real causes of the uprising would have brought discredit on German imperialism. But if ostensible causes (such as the "blood-thirstiness" of the Herero or "racial strife") or contributory factors (such as the dubious practices of the traders) were given prominence, part of the blame could be cast on the Herero themselves and on groups of settlers who had compromised themselves too much. This shrewd line of approach was fiercely resisted by the traders and farmers. Fearing the loss of compensation if they were held responsible for the rebellion, they had no scruples about drawing attention to the genuine causes involved.²² This notwithstanding, most writers continued to cite peripheral issues as the reasons for the insurrection.

The zealots who advocated colonial expansion on economic or emotional grounds were especially upset by the proposition that the Herero had been driven to revolt by the loss of their land. The Berlin branch of the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft (German Colonial Society) put the following motion before a general meeting of its members in May 1904: "The allegation now being circulated in Germany that the Herero have staged their rebellion because their livelihood is in jeopardy is false."²³ Karl Dove, erstwhile professor of geography in Jena, declared that it had by no means been the lack of land that had caused the Herero to take up arms.²⁴ Having thus denied the real cause underlying the uprising, one was now free to concentrate on incidental and subsidiary factors. Leutwein, for his part, took a more cautious line. In his voluminous book, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, he dismissed the whole issue in a single sentence: "I do not deem it necessary here to dwell upon the causes of the rebellion."²⁵

It should be mentioned here already that the question of what provoked the Herero uprising was repeatedly brought up in the Reichstag. In March 1904 it was demanded that a senior official be sent to South West Africa to investigate the causes. Oskar Stuebel, the Director of the Colonial Department, pinned no great hopes on the inquiry, but he seconded the idea all the same because he thought it might help to placate the Reichstag. Chancellor Bülow acquiesced in Stuebel's proposal to despatch a Special Commissioner.²⁶ The initial choice was Tattenbach, the German Minister in Lisbon, but he declined for health reasons. So they picked Friedrich von Lindequist, the German Consul-General in Cape Town.

When matters had reached that stage, Bülow put the matter before the Emperor. He noted: "Neither official reports nor other available news and statements from private sources enable us to form a clear idea of the causes behind the Herero rising. I deem it desirable—following the English model—to appoint a senior official to conduct an inquiry on the spot."²⁷

As it turned out, Wilhelm II professed no interest in the proposed investigation into the causes of the Herero rising. All he wished to hear was that the rebellion had been crushed. Therefore, he refused to endorse Bülow's line of action. His

decision was as follows: "As long as military operations continue, I consider an on-the-spot investigation into the causes of the Herero uprising by a senior official to be both premature and impracticable because the personalities in positions of authority will be difficult to reach. I therefore defer making a decision about the despatch of Consul-General Lindequist or some other official."²⁸ The appointment of a special commissioner to investigate the root causes of the Herero rising had thus been postponed indefinitely.

Although the outbreak of the Herero rising took the German Government by surprise, the turn of events in South West Africa suited their intentions quite well. The insurrection afforded the German imperialists a long-sought pretext for conquering the territory militarily and transforming the "Protectorate" into a colony. The German Minister in Lisbon, Tattenbach, said quite openly to a Portuguese cabinet minister what many German diplomats and government officials were thinking in private when he declared that "however regrettable the Herero uprising may be, it will lead to that vast territory being taken into possession and German South West Africa becoming a well-ordered and promising colony rather than a so-called sphere of interest."²⁹

The Search for a Scapegoat

Almost immediately after the outbreak of the uprising, there began a feverish drive in Germany to find a scapegoat for the events in South West Africa. The first to be blamed for the insurrection were the British. While it is true that in those years Anglo-German rivalry was increasingly becoming the main contradiction among the imperialist powers, its effect on Southern Africa was almost nil. Indeed, ever since the British and German colonialists had come to terms in 1890, the dominant feature of their relationship was cooperation in holding down the Africans. In the following years, too, collusion rather than rivalry was characteristic of the relationship between German and British imperialism in Southern Africa. It should be noted here that the files of the Imperial Colonial Office did not contain any evidence confirming the suspicion held by Anglophobe sections of the German bourgeoisie that the British were somehow involved in the outbreak of the Herero rising.

The anti-British campaign, calculated to absolve German imperialism of its responsibility for developments in South West Africa, was opened by Captain Gudewill, commander of HMS Habicht, with a telegram saying that "a number of Englishmen residing in German South West Africa are not free from involvement in the outbreak of the Herero rebellion."³⁰ The Kaiser, blowing hot and cold as far as his attitude to Britain was concerned, gave instructions "to refrain from any measures against these people for the time being, to continue investigations and to establish who they are, where they come from and where they have been found."³¹ Following this, Captain Gudewill sent another long cable to Berlin in

which four Englishmen were listed as suspects. One of them, called Hewitt, was an agent recruiting labour for the mines in the Transvaal. Gudewill's telegram was based on mere assumptions and concluded: "There seems to be no doubt that the English have helped to inflame popular feeling . . . In all likelihood, clear evidence can only be obtained by interrogating the chiefs."³²

In the meantime, Leutwein, who in his heart of hearts was anything but an Anglophobe, had joined the campaign. He preferred to swim with the tide so as not to swell the ranks of his critics unnecessarily. On 15 February 1904 he addressed the following telegram to the Imperial Chancellor: "In my judgement the rebellion is unquestionably due to incitement. In legal terms, the evidence available is as yet insufficient, but I advocate making an arrest all the same because otherwise the person in question will depart."³³ Despite a directive from the Emperor ordering him to make no arrests, but to secure the voluntary departure of the Englishmen concerned, Leutwein had meanwhile had Hewitt arrested. In a cable he informed the General Staff that "the Englishman Hewitt was detained for 18 hours and thereafter released on condition that he leave the Protectorate. Other Englishmen are not suspected of any wrongdoing."³⁴

Leutwein's move against a British subject met with a mixed response at the German Foreign Office. The German Ambassador to the Court of St. James was invited in a lengthy telegram to report immediately the response of the British government and press.

Another case, that came to public notice later, involved a British subject, a Boer from the Cape Colony by the name of Steenkamp, who was also temporarily detained by the Germans. He, too, had to be set free after a couple of days because no incriminatory evidence could be found against him. The Boer's wife, suspected of carrying with her documents incriminating her husband, was even subjected to a bodily search. The incident drew highly critical comments from the British press.

The naive anti-British campaign, which had had to be discontinued in the meantime for want of ammunition, was not without repercussions. The *Morning Post*, in an editorial on 1 March 1904, took the Germans to task for the way they had acted against Britain. Summing up the gist of the article for the Reich Chancellor, the German Ambassador in London wrote: "It rejects in the strongest terms the ludicrous and puerile charges that English influence has contributed to the rebellion. The alleged arrest of British subjects and the insults a woman from Cape Colony has purportedly suffered at the hands of German officials has caused considerable ill-feeling in South Africa. The paper says that precisely at a moment like this one must deeply regret any incident that tends to aggravate antagonism between our nations. While it may be convenient for Germany to blame its own mistakes on British intrigues, this is a dangerous game unlikely to earn her sympathy or respect."³⁵

After their abortive attempt to cast the English in the role of scapegoat for the events in South West Africa, the German imperialists began to look around for a

new victim. In the end, their choice fell on the German missionaries in South West Africa. They, of all people who had enabled the German colonialists to penetrate South West Africa in the first place, now became the target of the most trenchant criticism. Their detractors were taking advantage of the fact that Samuel Maharero had expressly given orders not to kill any missionaries. From this the German settlers drew the completely unfounded conclusion that the missionaries were making common cause with the Herero or at least aiding and abetting them.³⁶ According to this logic the missionaries became traitors to their country, thus filling the role of a whipping-boy.

It is difficult to think of a crime not imputed to them. One charge was that they had not looked after the dead bodies of the German soldiers and settlers who had fallen near Okahandja. An account of what had really happened was given by the missionary, Fritz Meier, who reported: "We were already on our way to the scene where the dead were lying. The natives had no objections to our doing so. But much to our chagrin we were forced to turn back because we were in danger of being killed by *German* bullets. I will readily provide fuller details about this matter if necessary."³⁷

The virulent campaign against the missionaries showed no signs of abating. One of the accusations levelled against them was that during the siege of Okahandja the Herero had fired on the German defenders from the house of the missionary Diehl.³⁸ This rumour was considered sufficient reason by German officers to have the missionary's house fired upon in retaliation.³⁹ This episode, which occurred in January 1904, aroused passions to such an extent that the Director of the Colonial Department finally decided to institute a judicial inquiry. The investigation was quite illuminating in many respects, but it ended inconclusively in late February 1905.

There was, in fact, much that could be held against the missionaries, but certainly not collusion with the Herero against the Germans. Charges of this kind were totally unfounded. Even their much-reviled "neutrality" was a myth. The plain fact was that the missionaries missed no opportunity to intervene in favour of their fellow-countrymen.⁴⁰ That they refused to fight against the Herero, arms in hand, as most Germans in South West Africa were demanding they should do, was a different matter. Sources dating from that time show in all clearness that the missionaries, who had often accompanied the Herero for weeks on end, divulged everything worth knowing about them to the German troops as soon as they reached the German lines.⁴¹ So there could really be no question of neutrality. It was an ironic twist of fate which earned them their poor reward for the services they rendered to German imperialism.

As the unfounded attacks on them grew more and more violent, the missionaries' patience was at last worn out. In a lengthy unsigned letter to the newspaper *Der Reichsbote*, they spelled out the real causes of the Herero rising, describing numerous cases in which Herero had been maltreated for no apparent reason by German settlers and soldiers.⁴² They were thus pouring oil on the flames. The

following day an article was published in the *Berliner Tageblatt* in which "official colonial quarters" were asked to call the anonymous missionary to account. The Director of the Colonial Department promptly acceded to this request. It soon became known that the unsigned letter had been penned by the missionary T. Irle. In a detailed letter to the Director, Irle justified his action. He wrote, among other things: "Considering the many defamatory statements and extravagant accusations levelled against us by a large number of whites in the Protectorate and by sections of the German press, Your Grace will understand why a missionary like myself who has lived among the Herero for approximately 34 years and is intimately familiar with the situation should have replied in rather sharp terms to the unjust allegations that the missionaries are responsible for the insurrection. We cannot and must not lie down under this insult. But nothing was further from my mind than to express 'highly deprecatory criticism of whites in the Protectorate' generally."⁴³

Leutwein deeply deplored the strictures passed on the missionaries because he needed their support. They knew too much and their revelations could only be detrimental to the interests of German imperialism. Leutwein's stance on this matter can be seen from a report to the Colonial Department, which reads in part: "It was a mistake on the part of our settlers to have cast much of the blame on the Mission immediately after the outbreak of the disturbances. In so doing they have forced them to reject the charges, and their outpourings have often been none too flattering for the whites. After all, the latter had laid themselves open to attack in many ways whereas the Mission can at the most be blamed for the fact that after 70 years of work they were so much out of touch with their followers that there was not a single warning voice (!) among them at such a critical moment."⁴⁴

As it was, the comebacks of the missionaries were of little avail. The Government turned the tables on them and repelled their "attacks". The fact remains that this shadow-boxing with the missionaries helped the German imperialists tide over the initial stages of the war in South West Africa.

It is worth noting that extremists of whatever hue fired their broadsides not only against the British and the Mission, but also against Governor Theodor Leutwein who they felt had not taken a sufficiently tough line with the indigenous population. Since his sympathy for the Africans has already been shown to be a myth, it may suffice here to point out that his ultimate failure was due to his inability to reconcile the conflicting interests of the colonial zealots. Indeed, if he had yielded to the demands of the settlers and land companies for a harsh policy of repression towards the Africans, the insurrection would certainly have erupted much earlier.

Within two days of the outbreak of the Herero uprising, the executive committee of the German Colonial League in Berlin issued a pamphlet blaming Leutwein for the events in South Africa: "The results of Governor Leutwein's policy of window-dressing, procrastination and appeasement are now patent to everyone.

Throughout the country, the natives who, unlike European private citizens, have for years been pampered and made immoderate in their demands through the Governor's blandishments are now in a state of ferment which threatens to assume dangerous proportions. Anyone familiar with the life of African and other less civilized non-white peoples knows that Europeans can assert themselves only by *maintaining the supremacy of their race at all costs*. Moreover, anyone familiar with the situation knows that the swifter and harsher the reprisals taken against rebels, the better the chances of restoring authority. The authorities in German South West Africa have grossly infringed these two fundamental tenets of colonial policy towards the native population."

The pamphlet ended with the demand "that the current system of colonial administration be abandoned following the successful completion of military operations and that the policy pursued so far towards the natives be changed in favour of our own race."⁴⁵

From the Colonial League's assertion that Leutwein's leniency *vis-à-vis* the Africans was responsible for the rebellion, it was but a small step to the allegation that "the rebellion was not provoked by the ill-treatment administered to the natives, but by the unreasonable treatment of the colonists and the lack of common sense on the part of an administration which is placing the settlers, who represent the colony's future, at a disadvantage in comparison with the natives."⁴⁶

The Herero Conduct of the War

The Herero uprising had doubtless been planned long in advance. But since time was not on their side, with their plight deteriorating further from year to year and the construction of the Otavi railway raising the spectre of total expropriation, the moment to act had come at the beginning of 1904. Circumstances were rather favourable at the time because three out of the four German companies of troops were operating in the far south of the country or were on their way there to deal with the uprising of the Bondelswarts so that Hereroland was practically devoid of German troops. Despite the careful planning, the decision to move into action was taken at short notice; this can be deduced from the fact that the 600 or so Herero engaged in the building of the Otavi railway were not notified in time. The internment of these Herero labourers at the outset of the insurrection deprived the insurgents of 600 fighting men.

Leading the insurgents was Samuel Maharero, Supreme Chief of the Herero. In all likelihood, the uprising was preceded by arguments and discussions⁴⁷ for which we do not possess any written evidence. However this may be, Samuel Maharero's brave act marked a break with his previous misguided policy. Since it was the Supreme Chief who ordered the uprising, all the Herero responded. In a letter to Hendrik Witbooi, Samuel was able to report proudly: "I am not battling alone, for we are all fighting together: Kaptein Zacharias, Otjimbingwe; Kaptein

Michael, Omaruru; and Kaptein David, Waterberg."⁴⁸ The joint uprising of all Herero against German imperialism signified an initial significant success for them.

Yet from the first the uprising was in the nature of a desperate rearguard action. The Herero were keenly aware that the opposing sides were unevenly matched owing to the inadequacy of their own weapons and equipment and the technical superiority of their colonial masters who were able to rely on unlimited supplies from Germany. But the Herero preferred to die rather than live under the German yoke any longer. Samuel Maharero wrote in a letter: "Let them [the Germans-H. D.] kill us all, let them all come here. There is no other way."⁴⁹ And the son of Chief Zacharias of Otjimbingwe later stated in evidence: "He [Chief Zacharias-H. D.] knew that if we rose in revolt we would be wiped out in battle because our men were almost unarmed and without ammunition. The cruelty and injustice of the Germans had driven us to despair, and our leaders and the people felt that death had lost much of its horror in the light of the conditions under which we were living."⁵⁰

Samuel Maharero displayed considerable political shrewdness by attempting, before the outbreak of the uprising, to unite all South West African for the struggle against German imperialism. In early 1904, just as in 1896, Hendrik Witbooi was the factor that tipped the scales. If he set up the standard of revolt, all Nama kapteins would follow his example. Therefore, in a letter dated 11 January 1904, Samuel informed him that he was planning an insurrection against the Germans and invited him to join in the rebellion.⁵¹ In another message to Witbooi he said: "All our obedience and patience with the Germans is of little avail, for each day they shoot someone dead for no reason at all. Hence I appeal to you, my Brother, not to hold aloof from the uprising, but to make your voice heard so that all Africa may take up arms against the Germans. Let us die fighting rather than die as a result of maltreatment, imprisonment or some other calamity. Tell all the kapteins down there to rise and do battle."⁵² Neither of these messages, however, reached its destination. Samuel Maharero sent them to Hermanus van Wyk, kaptein of the Rehoboth tribe, with the request that he pass them on to Witbooi. Instead, van Wyk transmitted them to the Germans⁵³ together with two similar letters addressed to himself. In fact, even if the letters had reached Hendrik Witbooi, they would hardly have induced him to change his mind. It was nothing short of a tragedy that the Herero and Nama took up arms successively rather than simultaneously against the hated German yoke.⁵⁴

At the beginning of the insurrection Samuel Maharero issued the following order: "In my capacity as Supreme Chief of the Herero I hereby decree and resolve that none of my people lay their hands upon the English, the Bastards, the Berg Damara, the Nama and the Boers. We shall not lay violent hands on any of these. I have made a solemn pledge not to make this known to anyone, including the missionaries."

This order is remarkable in two ways. For one thing, the uprising was directed only against the Germans whereas Britons and Boers were expressly excluded, so

there could be no question of a "racial war". This decision was yet another sign of the political shrewdness displayed by a Supreme Chief who did not want to make himself more enemies than was necessary. In issuing this directive, Samuel did, in a manner of speaking, neutralize the British and the Boers. For another thing, it is interesting to note that he delivered a clear warning regarding the missionaries. He appears to have been in no doubt that, if the missionaries had had advance knowledge of the Herero's plans, they would have betrayed their cause. The isolation of the missionaries made sure that the secret was kept. There was no traitor among the Herero.

As a matter of fact, Samuel Maharero's order does not tell the whole story. The conduct of the war and testimony given later by subchief Daniel Kariko showed that the uprising was exclusively directed against German *men*. Kariko stated: "At our clandestine meetings our chiefs decided to spare the lives of all German women and children. The missionaries, too, were to be spared. . . . Only German men were regarded as our enemies."⁵⁵

The day when the Herero rose up in arms was 12 January 1904. At one fell swoop they seized all of Hereroland (except for the fortified places which came under siege) and the bulk of the German settlers' livestock,⁵⁶ with more than 100 German settlers and soldiers meeting their deaths.

The Herero rising marked the beginning of "Germany's bloodiest and most protracted colonial war."⁵⁷ In the initial stages the Herero were superior to their opponents. But since they failed to take advantage of their temporary superiority to storm the fortified places of their colonial masters, they gradually saw the initiative pass to the enemy. Being Africans, they disliked the idea of taking buildings by assault. Rather, their intention was to bring about a decision in open battle. The Germans, however, were unwilling to take the risk of such a battle before the arrival of reinforcements had given them a clear position of superiority. They knew only too well that time was on their side. While the situation for the Herero remained unchanged, the Germans were able to strengthen their position step by step through a constant influx of manpower and *materiel*.

In the early stages of the uprising, therefore, the Germans limited themselves to relieving the localities besieged by the Herero. Captain Franke's second company, on its way southward at the beginning of the insurrection, was ordered to return at a forced pace and succeeded in raising the sieges of Windhoek, Okahandja and Omaruru. For the rest, the Germans were waiting for the arrival of reinforcements due to be moved up before the end of February.

The Anti-Herero Propaganda Campaign

To make up for the lack of victory reports from the South West African theatre of war in the initial stages of the conflict, the Germans engaged in tirades about what would be done to the Herero once their rebellion had been crushed. A few

days after the outbreak one official demanded: "The Herero must be disarmed, mercilessly punished and rounded up to perform forced labour for the railway."⁵⁸ Solioz, chief engineer of the Otavi railway, wrote in a detailed private message to Angelo Golinelli, the man in charge of South West African affairs in the Colonial Department: "All here in the colony agree that this rebellion must be put down with severity and that all those responsible must receive their just desserts."⁵⁹ And Gudewill, commander of HMS Habicht, cabled from Swakopmund: "The most severe punishment needs to be inflicted on the enemy. . . . The only way to restore calm and confidence among the whites is to disarm the rebels completely and to confiscate all their land and cattle."⁶⁰

The files of the Imperial Colonial Office contain a secret report drawn up by Count Georg von Stillfried and Rattonitz for Wilhelm II. It provides evidence that the Kaiser, circumventing all his ministries, was obtaining direct information about the situation in South West Africa from someone else of noble rank. The Count made the following proposals regarding the treatment to be meted out to the Herero after the suppression of their uprising: "The surviving natives must be disarmed to the last man and anyone found with a rifle must be sentenced to death. All natives from the insurgent tribes who are not in the service of the Government should on request be hired out in large or small numbers to individual farmers, merchants, etc., to perform labour in return for food. All headmen will have to be executed and their families, even if innocent, deported to another colony so as to prevent any member of these families from ever regaining any measure of influence. The tribes not involved in the rebellion will receive a sufficiently large plot of land as their inalienable property so as to continue keeping livestock. All other natives must not be allowed to keep any cattle, while the number of sheep and goats must not be greater than necessary to meet their demand for milk. All natives in the Protectorate who have been condemned to a term of imprisonment will have to carry a numbered identification tag and will have to report to the authorities outside their place of residence. Natives who are not free will be placed in closed settlements near their place of work and they will be supervised by a fellow-tribesman rather than a kaptein, who, like the headmen of the free tribes, will be in a position to provide the police with an uninterrupted flow of information."⁶¹

The list of statements designed to stir up hatred against the Herero or even calling for their annihilation could be lengthened at will, for there are more than enough examples in the files of the Imperial Colonial Office as well as other contemporary sources. The mood amongst whites in South West Africa was bordering on hysteria, a fact that prompted one missionary to exclaim in horror: "The Germans are consumed with inexpiable hatred and a terrible thirst for revenge, one might even say they are thirsting for the blood of the Herero. All you hear these days is words like 'make a clean sweep, hang them, shoot them to the last man, give no quarter'. I shudder to think of what may happen in the months ahead. The Germans will doubtless exact a grim vengeance."⁶²

One side-effect of the hysteria whipped up against the Herero was that quite a few people with economic interests in other German colonies tried to take advantage of the situation in South West Afrika. As an example, one Dr. Reinecke, writing in the *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung*, persistently demanded that rebellious Herero be deported to Samoa (in the Pacific) "by way of punishment" to fill the need for cheap labour there. This, in turn, induced a farmer named Eismann in German East Africa to request the Imperial Chancellor, Prince Bülow, to make available 1,000 to 2,000 Herero for a period of 10 years to labour as serfs (*sic*) on his 40,000 hectare plantation: "These rebels could become a genuine blessing for this colony [German East Africa-H. D.] and for the Fatherland."⁶³

The climate of hostility was being artificially maintained by official quarters in Germany who made sure that atrocity tales were dished up in the press from time to time. Usually it was reported that white women had been "butchered" by the Herero. The files of the Colonial Department contain a rather instructive series of telegrams which illustrate the methods used to fabricate such stories. When Leutwein, who willingly supplied the kind of information the Department wanted, mentioned in a cable that a few women had been "ill-treated", he was promptly asked whether "ill-treatment of white women meant rape."⁶⁴ His reply was: "Probably it means rape. But we have no evidence because this is not admitted by the women in question."⁶⁵ As regards the horror tales about "butchered" women, these were exposed as defamatory propaganda by the missionary J. Irle writing in *Der Reichsbote*. In this article, which has been mentioned before, Irle wrote: "Certain newspapers report that appalling atrocities have been perpetrated by the Herero, alleging that they have massacred the wives of settlers and also castrated a number of men. As far as the latter assertion is concerned, they have indeed done so in the case of whites who have raped their womenfolk in the most brutal manner . . .

"As for the reports about women who have allegedly been slaughtered and disembowelled, these have been shown to be fabrications. Frau Pilet and her sister in Frauenstein, Frau Külbel and her children in Oriambo, Frau Lange and her sister in Klein-Barmen, Frau Bremen and her five children in Otjonjati, Frau Kronewitter in Otjimbingwe—they all have not been killed, but are alive and well."⁶⁶

For all that, the German imperialists indicated no readiness whatever to abandon their atrocity propaganda against the Herero. Indeed, one of their aims was to condition the young soldiers who were being sent to South West Africa in their thousands for their "mission". As a result, it was not uncommon to hear the opinion that "one hundred of these brutes should be shot for every one of our own men killed in battle" and that the Herero should be "encircled and blown to bits by artillery fire". From there it was but a small step to the proposal that their wells should be poisoned. This was suggested to the Kaiser by an ordinary man who had obviously fallen for the atrocity propaganda against the Herero. If a few sentences from this letter, which was found among the files of the Imperial Colo-

nial Office, are quoted here, this is not because it is considered important except as it sheds some light on the frame of mind that was characteristic of many Germans at the time owing to the official propaganda to which they were subjected. The letter reads in part: "The reports about the second Negro rebellion in South West Africa have filled all Germans with dismay. Our troops are facing a new, powerful and savage enemy. It will be impossible for us to win victory by force of arms unless we resort to some new stratagem. In order to give that race an idea of the power we wield over them it is necessary that our soldiers, whenever they withdraw, thoroughly poison their water supplies. After all, we are not fighting against an enemy respecting the rules of fairness, but against savages. Never must we allow the Negroes to prevail. The consequences of such a victory would be dire indeed since even now the Negroes believe that Africa belongs to them rather than to the Lord above."⁶⁷

So much for the psychological effects of the atrocity propaganda carried on by official quarters. As for the practical effects, these were not long in coming.

The war of the German imperialists against the Herero people comprised two stages. During the first stage, lasting approximately from January to June 1904, the German forces were commanded by Governor Theodor Leutwein. That phase saw much fighting, with the Germans sometimes incurring considerable losses, but it was by no means decisive for the outcome of the war. During the second stage, beginning in June 1904, the German troops were led by Lieutenant-General von Trotha, a veritable butcher in uniform, who embarked on a campaign of annihilation against the Herero.

Initial Stages of the War

Leutwein, in the far south of the country at the outbreak of the uprising, returned to Swakopmund by sea⁶⁸ via Port Nolloth, Cape Colony, arriving at his destination on 11 February. In assessing the situation, he swung from one extreme to another. Initially, while still in the south, he tended to grossly underestimate the importance of the insurrection. In his reports to Berlin he said that no reinforcements were necessary, the troops available being quite sufficient. After arriving in Swakopmund he saw at a glance that this was not so and decided that it would be wiser, before taking any action, to wait for the fresh contingents that were already on their way or had been announced. But this would have meant taking no action whatever against the Herero until April or so. Hence Leutwein's tactics were rejected in Berlin where Wilhelm II had meanwhile charged the Army Chief of Staff with the supreme command over all operations in South West Africa, a major consideration being the risk of a further loss of prestige. Instead, the Governor was given instructions to move against the Herero as soon as practicable.

Having arrived at Okahandja on 18 February, Leutwein opened "hostilities" in his usual fashion by addressing a letter to Samuel Maharero. He explained the

reasons for his approach as follows: "This letter was non-committal, its sole purpose being to verify at no risk to ourselves the accuracy of the report that the bulk of the Herero still in the field were staying near the Otjisongati copper mine. I used to resort to this method of reconnaissance in all previous wars with no losses at all among the patrols entrusted with that mission. Uniformed patrols are invariably at a disadvantage compared with the non-uniformed enemy who knows the country inside out. In sending out such patrols we only risk losses without being assured of reliable information."⁶⁹

When Berlin learned about this step of Leutwein's there was already speculation that he was about to enter into negotiations with the Herero. The Director of the Colonial Department, therefore, lost no time in sending Leutwein a cable instructing him to "refrain from any bilateral negotiations with the Herero and to demand unconditional surrender." It said that negotiations, "whatever the circumstances, may be opened only with the permission of His Majesty."

Leutwein hurriedly prepared a lengthy report to the Colonial Department to justify his action. The report is of considerable interest because it constitutes an outline of the Governor's basic stance on the Herero issue. He wrote: "Colonial policy is not only a matter of leadership, but also of diplomacy. The insurgents must know that there is an alternative to death. Otherwise, we will only drive them to despair, bringing on an endless war that will be to our disadvantage. After all, the natives have nothing to lose now but their lives—and they are doomed anyway—while we suffer setback after setback due to the cessation of our work of colonization. The Spanish have won one 'victory' after another in Cuba only to lose that island in the end.

"As regards the future terms for subjugation, I share the Department's view that after all the outrages the Herero have committed nothing short of unconditional surrender will have to be enforced. On the other hand, I do not concur with those fanatics who want to see the Herero destroyed altogether. Apart from the fact that a people of 60,000 or 70,000 is not so easy to annihilate, I would consider such a move a grave mistake from an economic point of view. We need the Herero as cattle breeders, though on a small scale, and especially as labourers. It will be quite sufficient if they are politically dead. If this is practicable, they should be denied any form of tribal government and confined to reserves adequate for their needs . . .

"Those on *werfs* not involved in the conflict will also have to allow themselves to be disarmed and placed in reserves. All prisoners of war will have to be court-martialled and, if found guilty of having looted farms or murdering innocent people, be sentenced to death without exception. There can be no other form of punishment, considering the severity of the atrocities that have been perpetrated. For the rest, I shall consult the Department once again before reaching an agreement with the insurgents. The only favour I beg of you now is to give me a free hand concerning the diplomatic methods to be used to bring the negotiations to a close."⁷⁰

Leutwein divided the troops at his disposal into three detachments: an eastern, a western and a main detachment. The eastern contingent was entrusted with the task of sealing off the border with Bechuanaland. In setting up this force, Leutwein acted on the wrong assumption that the Herero would try to cross the border before a decisive engagement came about.⁷¹ In fact, there could be no question of this. The eastern detachment, or to be more precise, an advance party, consisting of 11 officers and 38 men, was engaged in combat by the Herero at Owikokorero on 13 March 1904. Seven officers and 19 men were killed and three officers and two men wounded in the fighting, more than half the unit thus being knocked out.⁷² On 3 April 1904 the Herero again attacked the eastern contingent, this time at Okaharui, killing one officer and 31 men and wounding another two officers and 15 men.⁷³ According to a contemporary military writer, this engagement "heralded the collapse of the eastern detachment."⁷⁴ The losses suffered in the fighting and an outbreak of typhoid cut the force from 534 to 151 men so that the eastern contingent had to be dissolved on 6 May 1904.

As for the western detachment, designed to operate between Omaruru and Outjo, the information available is very scanty. It was merged with the main detachment late in March.

The main body of Leutwein's troops did not become ready for action until March 1904. On 9 April the force was engaged at Onganjira by about 3,000 Herero. Only their superiority in weaponry enabled the Germans to repel the persistent attacks mounted by Herero. A few days later, on 13 April, there followed an encounter at Oviumbo where the German main detachment was encircled by the Herero. Finding himself in dire trouble, Leutwein ordered his force to retreat at nightfall, thereby saving the main contingent from being wiped out. A German military writer observed later that the Oviumbo engagement had been a near disaster.⁷⁵ Under the impact of this traumatic experience, Leutwein decided to discontinue all major operations against the Herero for the time being and to wait for further reinforcements before undertaking a new move.

As can be seen from a telegram, the General Staff took advantage of the outcome of the encounter at Oviumbo to censure Leutwein's conduct of the war. The Governor's reply was: "I am deeply upset by the reproach of having been unsuccessful. My impression was that by ordering the night march at Oviumbo I saved the force from disaster. Please send a senior officer in whom the General Staff has full confidence to replace me because only thus can beneficial cooperation be ensured. I shall discharge my duties as the commanding officer here until his arrival and then assist him with advice in my capacity as Governor."⁷⁶

Shortly afterwards, he received word that Wilhelm II had made Lieutenant-General Lothar von Trotha Commander-in-Chief of the German troops in South West Africa. At the same time, he was given orders "to desist from any further decisive operation until the arrival of the new Commander-in-Chief and the reinforcements being newly assembled at home." The period of inaction was thus extended even more.

When General von Trotha arrived in South West Africa in June 1904, the war against the Herero had been going on for five months. By that time, despite a constant influx of reinforcements, the powerful German Reich had not yet scored any major success. Rather, the Herero, at first severely underrated by the Germans, had turned out to be a formidable adversary. Almost all accounts of the war in South West Africa are unanimous in their assessment of the Herero as a very valiant people. The Germans were especially surprised by the frequency of the offensive operations which the Herero launched in spite of their inferiority in terms of weaponry. Indeed, the German military even had to concede, though only grudgingly, that the Herero were not wholly devoid of understanding of tactical matters.

The Herero stoutly defended every inch of their land, for they knew what they were fighting for and that the war for their independence was a just one. Several German authors⁷⁷ reported that the Herero women supported their men from behind the lines, chanting slogans to encourage them to fight on with unfaltering courage. They shouted: "Whose land is Hereroland? Hereroland is our land." These words, incidentally, are yet additional proof of the close connection between the uprising and the issue of land ownership.

All the Herero tribes were involved in the fighting that took place in 1904. The solidarity among them was such that many outside the country at the outbreak of the uprising abandoned their jobs in order to join the insurgents in South West Africa. This was true, for example, of the Herero who had been hired in 1903 to work in the mines of the Cape Colony. As a report published later indicates, only 600 out of an original 900 were still in Cape Colony in 1905. Referring to the 300 or so who had left, the report notes laconically: "The rest either died . . . or deserted to reach the Protectorate by land and join the rebels there."⁷⁸

The Germans Take No Prisoners

The Herero were very humane in their conduct of the war. They were fighting exclusively against German men, the missionaries being spared as were women and children. Contrary to newspaper reports pretending otherwise, only three white women were killed (apparently inadvertently) and not a single child.⁷⁹ It is a well-known fact that the Herero took the wives and children of German settlers killed in battle to sites near the German lines in a great number of cases,⁸⁰ often at the risk of their own lives.

The German conduct of the war was diametrically opposed to that of the Herero. The Germans did not spare the wives and children of their adversaries. As the missionary Hammann noted in a report, his Herero housemaids, on learning that German troops were approaching, took to flight in horror. He said that the news of the impending arrival of German soldiers caused such a panic among the

Herero "that not only did my colleague's housemaid, who was busy washing dishes, drop everything and run away from the house in dismay, shouting 'The soldiers are coming to kill us all', but so did all my own people, leaving our house in no time without any servants or other Herero. Nothing could stop them from doing so—no amount of coaxing, no word of encouragement and no appeal to stay on. Their reply was: 'The Germans are coming. From Okahandja they have advanced further to Otjosazu, and the company from the south, with a wagonload of ammunition, is now within a few miles of Secis. If the soldiers get us, they will spare no one, not even women and children. We must flee at once, under cover of darkness, so as not to fall into the soldiers' hands. The women and children on the *werfs* in the Nosob area have already set out for the Onjati Mountains with their cattle, while the men must keep the soldiers in check at Secis to give their women and children a sufficient start over the enemy. The wounded are carried between the horses to prevent them falling into the hands of the whites. Maratjo, headman of a *werf*, has been wounded in the leg.' Yes, indeed, they have been scared out of their wits, something I have never experienced before."⁸¹

The Herero had good reasons to be afraid of the German troops, for it had become common knowledge by then that the Germans were taking no prisoners. This emerged clearly from letters known as *Hunnenbriefe* in which members of the armed forces boasted of having given no quarter; this constituted a flagrant violation of international law. The Socialist deputy, August Bebel, raised this issue in the Reichstag in March 1904, protesting vigorously against the savage methods of warfare employed by the German side.⁸² Although Dr. Oskar Stuebel, Director of the Colonial Department, denied the existence of any instruction that no prisoners should be taken and, further, made the "felicitous remark" (in the words of the *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung*) that "cruelty and brutality are alien to the German character",⁸³ he found himself obliged to ask Leutwein for an explanation.

The Governor had to admit that "the deputy Bebel was this time correct in his judgement in many respects." He said that there had been no orders to kill women and children or to take no prisoners at all. "It is only natural, however, that after all that has happened our soldiers do not show excessive leniency. And it is no less natural that no orders to show leniency have been given . . . In the light of this state of affairs, it is no wonder that there has so far been no opportunity during the fighting to take prisoners other than wounded ones. To spare their lives and to encourage desertion in that way at least is a political necessity."

Summing up, Leutwein declared: "Not a single unwounded Herero has been captured in the course of the fighting. As for wounded ones, I know of only two, who were taken prisoner near Ongangira on 9 April. One of them died soon after he was captured while the other, who had suffered only minor injuries, was provided with a bandage and food. In the evening he was caught stealing a hatchet, apparently with the intention of using it to effect his escape. He was therefore put before a court-martial and sentenced to death."⁸⁴

Another fact highlighted by August Bebel was the lynching of Africans by white

settlers, especially at the beginning of the Herero uprising. Leutwein had to admit this, too, but he tried to play down the matter by describing the victims of these vicious practices as "cattle thieves" and "marauders". It was, however, quite feasible for the German settlers, bent as they were on revenge, to so label any African they were out to lynch. Understandably, these crimes were not mentioned in the public records and publications made available. This lends special interest to the information contained in a secret report which Leutwein prepared for the Colonial Department. He wrote: "There is, for that matter, yet another kind of prisoner, viz. cattle thieves and marauders captured by the population in developments unrelated to the war. In accordance with an order issued by the Imperial Chancellor on 26 April 1896, these are put on trial and invariably sentenced to death by an all-white jury. If a Governor had opposed the carrying out of such death sentences he would have compromised himself, in particular in the early stages of the disturbances. Even the deputy Bebel would find it impossible to hold his own in the face of popular feeling here. He was, in fact, well informed on the matter in so far as most of these executions took place in Karibib, at a time when I was still visiting the south."⁸⁵

It should be noted, then, that Leutwein expressly stated in his report to the Colonial Department that not a single prisoner had been taken by May 1904 and that numerous lynching episodes had occurred, notably during the early stages of the uprising. But this was to be merely the beginning. Under General von Trotha, whose one consuming passion was the annihilation of the Herero, it was only a matter of time before the last traces of respect for international law were abandoned in the conduct of the war.

As the Germans were unable to chalk up any success worth mentioning in the initial phase of the war against the Herero, they made up for this by claiming to have prevented the Herero from escaping across the border. However, since the Herero had no intention of crossing the border at that time, but were determined to seek a showdown within their own country, this German "success" was not exactly remarkable. Late in March part of the Herero were still to be found south of the Swakopmund-Windhoek railway, posing a constant threat to the Germans' chief supply line. Not infrequently, the Herero advanced to within a few miles of Windhoek, putting the Germans in an increasingly precarious situation.

Late in March the main force of the Herero was being assembled near the Onjati Mountains, reinforced by contingents moved up from the south⁸⁶ and the north.⁸⁷ Leutwein had failed to prevent this build-up, which at that stage could only be seen as an undesirable development by the Germans. His attempt to deal the Herero a crippling blow in the Onjati Mountains proved unsuccessful. The engagements near Onganjira and Oviumbo, mentioned earlier, prompted Leutwein to avoid any further clashes with the Herero and to await the arrival of fresh reinforcements first.

In mid-May the Herero withdrew northward, in the direction of the Waterberg. This was a shrewd tactical manoeuvre, greatly compounding the difficulties be-

setting the Germans. Whereas all previous battles had taken place more or less near the railway, the German lines of supply were now becoming longer and longer. Everything the soldiers needed had to be transported by oxwagon, a fact that was soon to pose serious problems for the Germans.

On 11 June 1904 General Lothar von Trotha arrived in South West Africa. Only five days later he asked Leutwein to come and see him at Okahandja where the first meeting between the two men took place. Leutwein's son later reported that his father had advised the new Commander-in-Chief "to conduct the war in such a way as to ensure the survival of the Herero nation. General von Trotha listened calmly to these words and then replied: 'Your remarks have been of great interest to me, but you will have to allow me to conduct the campaign as I see fit.'"⁸⁸ This, at least, is Leutwein's version.

About six months later von Trotha described his first encounter with Leutwein in a communication to the Imperial Chancellor: "When I took over as Commander-in-Chief, Governor Leutwein handed me a proclamation, ready for the press, that was to be issued to the Herero. Astutely phrased, it condemned them for what they had done, but promised clemency if they showed repentance and were prepared to mend their ways. I objected immediately that I was, as a matter of principle, against dealing with the rebellion in that way and expressed my firm belief that such a course of action was running counter to the intentions of His Majesty the Emperor."⁸⁹ For his part, Leutwein did his best to play down the differences between him and General von Trotha in an optimistically worded cable sent to the Foreign Office in Berlin.⁹⁰

Both Leutwein and von Trotha were pursuing the same aim: to end the uprising forthwith, to force the Herero to surrender unconditionally, and to take away their last possessions. But while the goal of the two men was the same, they differed on the means of achieving it. In seeking to gain his ends, Leutwein always showed a concern for the future of the colony after the crushing of the rebellion whereas von Trotha did not. The Governor was acutely aware that after a campaign of extermination against the Herero the colony would have lost most of its value for German imperialism. Hence his demand to spare the country's most important productive force—the people—and the cattle as well.⁹¹ Thwarted in his plans by the hysterical mood prevailing in South West Africa towards the indigenous population and faced with the failure of his strategy against the Herero, he was quite content to relinquish his post as military leader.

In marked contrast General von Trotha was a soldier and nothing else. He had gained his "baptism of fire" by resorting to ruthless methods in suppressing popular uprisings in East Africa (notably the Wahehe rising in 1896) as well as the Boxer Rebellion in China in 1900–01.⁹² His one overriding ambition was to be able to report to the Kaiser that the revolt had been quelled. In a letter to Leutwein he wrote somewhat later: "I did not receive any instructions or directives on being appointed Commander-in-Chief in South West Africa. His Majesty the

Emperor only said that he expected me to crush the rebellion by fair means or foul and to inform him later of the causes that had provoked the uprising."⁹¹

Von Trotha made a point of providing a pseudo-scientific rationale for his brutal and primitive concept of warfare in Africa. Thus he wrote: "I know enough tribes in Africa. They all have the same mentality insofar as they yield only to force. *It was and remains my policy to apply this force by unmitigated terrorism and even cruelty. I shall destroy the rebellious tribes by shedding rivers of blood and money.* [My emphasis-H. D.] Only thus will it be possible to sow the seeds of something new that will endure."⁹²

Soon after his arrival in South West Africa General von Trotha decided—like Leutwein before him—that it would be wiser for him to wait for the reinforcements that had been promised or were already on their way before launching a decisive offensive against the Herero. He considered the situation of the German troops to be very delicate, the long supply lines being a matter of special concern. If, as was quite likely, the fighting were to drag on for some time, the only way of solving the supply problem was to expedite the construction of the Otavi railway. The original plan had been to complete the line, which was to link Swakopmund and Otavi, within two and a half years.

At the time the Herero rising broke out, however, only a few kilometres of what was to become a 570-kilometre-long track had been laid. The 600-odd Herero working on the railway were "largely removed on security grounds", as a business report of the Otavi-Gesellschaft noted.⁹³ Not being able to count on indigenous workers for the duration of the uprising, the company hired Italian workers instead.

General von Trotha, anxious to see the construction work proceed at a faster pace, was successful in his efforts, for on 4 August 1904 the German Government signed a contract with the Otavi-Gesellschaft to speed up the work on the railway line. By the terms of the contract the company undertook to extend the Otavi line as far as Omaruru by 31 December 1904 in return for a grant of 1,750,000 Marks.⁹⁴ As it turned out, it proved impossible to honour the contract to the letter because the ill-paid and ill-fed Italian labourers went on strike in protest against their working conditions. Owing to their protracted strike, the work did not advance as far as Omaruru until 24 August 1905, i.e. 236 days behind schedule. The Italian workers were thus of great help to the Africans in their battle for independence.

The Battle in the Waterberg: The Genocide of the Herero

After reinforcements had been moved up, von Trotha made preparations for a decisive assault on the Herero south of the Waterberg. The German Commander-in-Chief ordered the Waterberg to be surrounded by his troops. But there could be no question of encircling and destroying the Herero given the vastness of the territory and the lack of a sufficient number of men to seal off the whole area of the Waterberg. The odds were that the Herero could not be prevented from

breaking out at some point or other. They were, in any case, determined to confront the enemy for the final battle rather than avoid such an encounter by crossing the border as was assumed in the German camp right up to the last moment.

On 4 August 1904 von Trotha announced his "Directives for the Attack on the Herero". This order is of special interest because it clearly spells out the General's aim of annihilating the Herero⁹⁷ and because it provided for a rather peculiar disposition of his forces.⁹⁸ Even someone ignorant of military matters cannot fail to notice that the six German detachments spread out all around the Waterberg greatly differed in size, the smallest contingent (under Major von der Heyde) having taken up position to the southeast. As Colonel Deimling's force, which was easily the largest, had received orders to attack the Herero from the west, there can be little doubt about the tactics being pursued: the Herero, finding their way eastward and southward blocked by the comparatively strong contingents commanded by von Estorff and Mueller, would overrun the small force under Major von der Heyde and break through in a southeasterly direction.

Paul Leutwein, the Governor's son, later reported that both Major von Estorff and his father had warned against such a disposition of the German troops. He said that the Governor "foresaw the breakthrough of the Herero and their resulting flight into the sandveld or across the border. He realized that in both cases the entire people would be lost. In another conversation he expressly warned von Trotha against carrying out this plan, suggesting that von der Heyde's and Deimling's detachments be simply switched around. But von Trotha could not bring himself to make such a concession."⁹⁹

As a matter of fact, it was not—as Leutwein's son presumed—incompetence on the part of the General that led to this arrangement of the German forces; rather it was a well-thought-out plan that the Herero should break through towards the south and perish in the desert there. A study prepared by the General Staff is quite explicit on this point: "If, however, the Herero were to break through, such an outcome of the battle could only be even more desirable in the eyes of the German Command because the enemy would then seal his own fate, being doomed to die of thirst in the arid sandveld."¹⁰⁰ Von Trotha had but one aim: to destroy the Herero nation. He believed that the easiest way of achieving it was to drive the Herero into the Omaheke Desert. But such a crime can only be described as genocide.

The date fixed by the General for the German assault was 11 August 1904. After two days of fierce fighting, in which the Germans brought into action 30 pieces of artillery and 12 machine-guns, the Herero had to yield to the Germans' superiority in weaponry. In their attempt to pierce the German lines they ultimately discovered the only weak point—von der Heyde's unit southeast of the Waterberg — and achieved a breakthrough there as von Trotha had anticipated in his sinister scheme. Stretching out before them was the sandy waste of the Omaheke Desert. The study of the General Staff noted laconically: "The arid Omaheke was

to complete what the German Army had begun: the extermination of the Herero nation."¹⁰¹

Contrary to what is often alleged,¹⁰² it is not true that the Herero were destroyed by the fighting in the Waterberg. Rather, the losses sustained during the battle were relatively slight.¹⁰³ The annihilation of the Herero was due to the militarily unjustifiable measures taken by von Trotha after the fighting in the Waterberg.¹⁰⁴

Von Trotha immediately set off in pursuit of the Herero, bent as he was on their total destruction. To achieve this objective, it was quite sufficient to make it impossible for them to escape in a different direction. When part of the Herero tried to turn northeastward, their way was barred at once by a German unit. The study of the General Staff mentions this fact, observing on a rather complacent note: "With several of our contingents in hot pursuit, they too [the Herero-H.D.] were pushed southeastward toward the arid, waterless Omaheke."¹⁰⁵ Another attempt by the Herero to escape in a southern direction was prevented by German troops through a sweeping outflanking movement. By 20 August or so, the German forces had driven the Herero to the western edge of the Omaheke sandveld. Through constant harassment they forced them to flee into the sandveld itself. German units and patrols tracked down the Herero to the last water-hole and drove them away from there. Von Trotha then ordered the Omaheke to be sealed off by a 250-kilometre cordon in the west and southwest, making it virtually impossible for anyone to escape from the desert. This cordon was maintained until about mid-1905. The bulk of the Herero met a slow, agonizing death. The study of the General Staff noted that the Omaheke had inflicted a worse fate on the Herero than "German arms could ever have done, however bloody and costly the battle."¹⁰⁶

Von Trotha's Conduct of the War

Von Trotha's "conduct of the war", culminating in genocide, will now be considered in some detail. First of all, let us take a look at his notorious proclamation, known as the "Extermination Order", which, significantly enough, is not mentioned at all in the study of the German General Staff. The proclamation reads:

Osombo-Windimbe, 2 October 1904

"I, the Great General of the German Soldiers, address this letter to the Herero people. The Herero are no longer considered German subjects. They have murdered, stolen, cut off ears, noses and other parts from wounded soldiers, and now refuse to fight on out of cowardice. I have this to say to them: Whoever turns over one of the kapteins to one of my garrisons as a prisoner will receive 1,000 Marks and he who hands over Samuel Maharero will be entitled to a reward of 5,000 Marks. *The Herero people will have to leave the country. Otherwise I shall force them to do so by means of guns. Within the German boundaries, every Herero, whether found armed or unarmed, with or without cattle, will be*

shot. I shall not accept any more women and children. I shall drive them back to their people—otherwise I shall order shots to be fired at them. These are my words to the Herero people.

Signed: the Great General of the Mighty Kaiser,
von Trotha.

"This order shall be made known to the troops at the roll-call together with the additional provision that soldiers capturing a kaptein are also entitled to the reward offered and that the firing of shots at women and children means firing over their heads to drive them away. *I am in no doubt that as a result of this order no more male prisoners will be taken*, but neither will it give rise to atrocities committed on women and children. These will surely run away after two rounds of shots have been fired over their heads. I trust that our force will always bear in mind the good reputation that the German soldier has acquired.

The German Command
Signed: Lieutenant-General von Trotha."¹⁰⁷

Although the proclamation by the "Great General of the Mighty Kaiser" speaks for itself, it is necessary to add a few remarks. That the Herero were "no longer considered German subjects" is a bad joke because they had never had this status under international law. General von Trotha ordered the Herero to leave their own country, threatening to kill all those who refused to obey. He distinguished between men on the one hand and women and children on the other. While men were to be killed at once, women and children were to be driven into the Omaheke Desert, there to perish. In point of fact, no such distinction was made in practice. All Herero—men, women and children alike—were killed on falling into the hands of German soldiers.

We have thus touched upon one of the grimmest aspects of von Trotha's savage warfare in South West Africa, which was rife with appalling cruelties of all kinds. Not surprisingly, it is mentioned neither in the official records¹⁰⁸ nor in the extensive German literature¹⁰⁹ devoted to the war in South West Africa. But more and more details about the German "conduct of the war" filtered through from the testimony given by surviving Herero and by other Africans who had taken part in the war on the German side as well as by Cape Boers who had served the Germans as drovers.

Jan Cloete, from Omaruru, deposed on oath that he had acted as a guide for the Germans: "I was present when the Herero were defeated in a battle at Hamakiri in the vicinity of the Waterberg. After the battle all men, women and children who fell into German hands, wounded or otherwise, were mercilessly put to death. Then the Germans set off in pursuit of the rest, and all those found by the wayside and in the sandveld were shot down or bayoneted to death. The mass of the Herero men were unarmed and thus unable to offer resistance. They were just trying to get away with their cattle."¹¹⁰

Johannes Krüger, kaptein of the Berg Damara settlement at Gaub, who had participated in the campaign against the Herero on the German side, made the following sworn statement: "We [the Berg Damara-H. D.] refused to kill Herero women and children, but the Germans spared no one. They killed thousands. I was a witness to this slaughter day after day."¹¹¹

Hendrik Campbell, commander of the contingent of the Rehoboth tribe that also was fighting on the German side, testified under oath: "When the engagement was over, we discovered eight or nine sick Herero women who had been left behind. Some of them were blind. They had a supply of water and food. But the German soldiers burned them alive by setting fire to the hut in which they were lying." When Campbell spoke to a German officer about this incident, he was told: "So what? They might have infected us with some disease." Somewhat later Campbell's men captured 70 Herero who were then turned over to the Germans. When Campbell returned from patrol duty two days later, he found all the Herero lying dead in a kraal.¹¹²

The few statements quoted here—and the list of examples could be much longer—throw a stark light on the criminal nature of German warfare in South West Africa. When sick and wounded soldiers were sent home for treatment, details of the savage conduct of the war, which was in clear violation of international law, soon began to leak out in Germany as well. This induced Prince Bernhard von Bülow, the Imperial Chancellor, to ask the Chief of the Army General Staff, General Alfred von Schlieffen, for an explanation in mid-December 1904. In his reply, Schlieffen flatly denied that any Herero women and children had been killed, but added: "If in an exceptional case or two women have been shot all the same, it should be borne in mind that women have not only taken part in the fighting, but have, in fact, been the principal instigators of the hideous and terrible tortures to which our wounded soldiers have often been subjected and that the sight of the victims, deliberately put on display in another act of bestiality, has provoked righteous anger among our men."¹¹³

This devious statement is of interest only for its admission that German soldiers, in their "righteous anger," had killed Herero women. All the arguments adduced to justify or excuse this outrage were traditional stand-bys of the atrocity propaganda carried on against the Herero. They were produced to distract attention from the misdeeds of the German troops.

Commenting on his order to drive the Herero women and children back into the Omaheke, General von Trotha hinted a few years later that he, the "hero" of the Waterberg, had already been at the end of his tether. Apologetically, he claimed that no other option had been open to him: "My force was on the verge of disaster. If I had made the small water-holes accessible to the womenfolk, I would have run the risk of an African catastrophe comparable to the Battle of the Beresina."¹¹⁴

One dimension of German war strategy in South West Africa was to "eliminate" or "attack" the *werfs*, to use the stereotype expressions found in von Trotha's

reports. In plain language this meant that African settlements were raided and destroyed and their inhabitants put to death. This was done both in the hinterland and near the front line. It was irrelevant whether those attacked had been involved in the war or not and whether they were Herero, Bergdamara or San ("Bushmen")—the German soldiers were anyway incapable of distinguishing between them. Anyone with a dark skin was considered fair game. In a brochure entitled *Was soll aus den Herero werden?* (What is to become of the Herero?) the missionary J. Irle was particularly scathing in his criticism of this aspect of the German policy of extermination.¹¹⁵

Treachery was another characteristic feature of the German conduct of the war in South West Africa. A case in point was an incident in Ombakaha where German officers invited Herero leaders for alleged negotiations and then shot them dead. The news of this incident spread like wildfire among the Herero and other people in South West Africa, but, significantly enough, it is not mentioned in the study of the General Staff. However, the files of the Reich Colonial Office contain a lengthy report drawn up by the officer responsible for the General Staff¹¹⁶ as well as a letter from a missionary¹¹⁷ conversant with the details of the crime. Moreover, there is also the account given by one of the Herero leaders¹¹⁸ who survived the massacre. The three versions tally in great measure so that Ombakaha events can be reconstructed rather faithfully. When on 29 October 1904 a German patrol encountered a group of Herero, these were told that their kaptein should enter into negotiations with the Germans. The Herero, sincerely interested in making peace, charged four headmen with sounding the Germans out on the seriousness of their offer. Previously, Lieutenant von Beesten had instructed his men "to avoid anything that might arouse suspicion and not to open fire under any circumstances." In negotiations that dragged on for hours the officer sought to convince the four emissaries of his allegedly peaceful intentions. Winding up, he declared: "Let the kapteins come here with as many people as they think fit. I shall then go with them all to see the Great General and intercede on their behalf because they are the first to acknowledge having done wrong. I will do them no harm." But in his communication to the General Staff he admitted: "The idea behind my tactics was to capture all the kapteins alive."

On the morning of 2 November some 70 Herero approached the German camp. Whereas the majority of the Herero remained at some distance, their eleven or so headmen, led by Joel Kavizeri from Okahandja and Saul from Otjenga, went into the German camp unarmed. Lieutenant von Beesten gave the following account of what happened: "I had discussed all eventualities with Lieutenant von Hammerstein beforehand, and I had also prepared my men for a possible fight. No one was to fire a shot without my explicit orders. Lieutenant von Hammerstein had been entrusted with the task of encircling the enemy and guaranteeing our safety. Lieutenant Hermens's patrol had taken up position near the horse and cattle kraals. Having welcomed the Herero one by one, I began to negotiate with them. When I spelled out my first condition—the surrender of their arms—this

was bitterly opposed. I discussed the matter for about half an hour, everyone getting ready for action in the meantime, as Lieutenant von Hammerstein reported. Then I told foreman Eliphas to order the men to turn in their weapons at once. On his return, he said they were afraid to do so unless my soldiers, too, put away their weapons. At the same time, Lieutenant von Hammerstein reported that the Herero were making preparations for battle and had begun to spread out on their right flank with Pietbison in charge of the operation. Thereupon I broke off the negotiations, assigned a place further sideways to all but one of the kapteins and headmen, and sent one headman who had remained unfamiliar to me to his people to tell them that I would order fire to be opened forthwith if they did not lay down their arms. I assured the kapteins that they would come to no harm unless they ran away and went to confront my men. The enemy were now presenting a completely different picture. They had fanned out in a matter of five or ten seconds, whereupon I gave orders to open fire. For a brief period of time the enemy vigorously returned the fire, but then careered down the hillside, pursued by our shells and bullets, to come to a halt at a distance of approximately 300 metres. In the meantime the kapteins and headmen had tried to escape and had all been killed within a radius of 10 to 300 metres . . . About 12 noon the remainder of the enemy withdrew. As far as I know, no one escaped unscathed . . . There were no casualties on our side."¹¹⁹

Such criminal practices were bound to have repercussions among the Africans. The senior civil servant of the Colonial Administration in Windhoek, Hans Tecklenburg, stated in a tone of resignation at the end of 1904: "Our prestige among the natives, the prestige of the white man has vanished forever."¹²⁰

The butchery at Ombakaha ruled out any further negotiations, which suited von Trotha very well. Indeed, the word "negotiations" did not exist in his vocabulary. This was also reflected in a report to the Chief of the Army General Staff in which he wrote: "The crucial question for me was how to bring the war against the Herero to a close. The Governor and some other 'old Africans' on the one hand and myself on the other are poles apart on this issue. The former have long advocated negotiations, describing the Herero nation as a labour reservoir that will be needed in future. I take a completely different view. As I see it, the nation must be destroyed as such and, should this prove impossible to achieve by tactical moves, they will have to be forced out of the country through a long-term strategy. It will be possible, by occupying all sources of water supply from Grootfontein all the way to Gobabis and by maintaining high mobility of our columns, to track down and gradually obliterate the small bands of people flocking westward. To pursue the main contingents of the nation with their kapteins right into the Omaheka sandveld and to capture and annihilate them is not feasible at the moment. On the question of provisions I have already passed the limits of what is reasonable. Only time will show to what extent it will be possible for the Estorff unit left behind in Osombo-Ovondimbe to drive them [the Herero] back from any water-holes they may find and to force them to seek refuge in Bechuana-

land. If this is impracticable, everything will depend on whether the Herero are capable of holding their own in the Omaheke sandveld until the onset of the rainy season, whether they will attempt to cross into British territory, or whether they will try to regain their traditional grazing grounds through force or total submission. Since I neither can nor will come to terms with these people without express orders from His Majesty the Emperor and King, it is essential that all sections of the nation be subjected to rather stern treatment. I have begun to administer such treatment on my own initiative and, barring orders to the contrary, will continue to do so as long as I am in command here. My intimate knowledge of so many Central African tribes—Bantu and others—has made it abundantly plain to me that Negroes will yield only to brute force, while negotiations are quite pointless. Before my departure yesterday I ordered the warriors captured recently to be court-martialled and hanged¹²¹ and all women and children who sought shelter here to be driven back into the sandveld, handing them a copy of the proclamation drawn up in Othiherero . . . To accept women and children who are for the most part sick, poses a grave risk to the force, and to feed them is out of the question. For this reason, I deem it wiser for the entire nation to perish than to infect our soldiers into the bargain and to make inroads into our water and food supplies. Over and above this, any gesture of leniency on my part would only be regarded as a sign of weakness by the Herero. They will either meet their doom in the sandveld or try to cross into Bechuanaland. This uprising is and remains the beginning of a racial struggle, which I foresaw for East Africa as early as 1897 in my reports to the Imperial Chancellor."¹²²

Reiterating his basic stance on the question of negotiations von Trotha wrote several years later: "As matters stood, there could be no question of negotiations on the 12th and 13th [August 1904—H. D.] unless we wanted to betray our impotence and confusion."¹²³

A brief, but fierce power struggle developed between von Trotha and Leutwein over the question of whether to treat with the Herero after the battle in the Waterberg. The Governor realized in horror that von Trotha would not budge an inch from his policy of extermination. This was expressly confirmed in a message which the Commander-in-Chief sent to Leutwein: "Throughout my period of duty here the eastern border of the colony will remain sealed off and terrorism will be employed against any Herero showing up. That nation must vanish from the face of the earth. Having failed to destroy them with guns, I will have to achieve my end in that way."¹²⁴ In addition, Leutwein had been reliably informed that a group of Herero under Salatiel had offered to surrender, but von Trotha had turned them down. This episode had occurred a few days before the Ombakaha massacre, which von Trotha had apparently engineered to rule out any further offers by the Herero to negotiate.

At that stage, Leutwein cabled the following message to the Foreign Office in Berlin: "According to reliable sources, a number of Herero have offered to submit. The matter has been decided without the Governor being consulted.

Please state what, if any, political power and responsibility still rests with the Governor."¹²⁵ Von Trotha seized upon this telegram to declare any further collaboration with Leutwein impossible, maintaining that Salatiel had made no offer of submission. In a letter to Leutwein he not only justified his conduct but scornfully rejected the Governor's complaints: "I cannot possibly support by military means a policy which I abhor nor can I recognize a second government dealing with more than purely administrative matters. If you are of the opinion that responsibility for the events here—military and political questions being closely interwoven—still rests with you, you should long ago have raised this issue. As you have failed to do so, I am hereby taking the initiative in order to remove any doubts that may still exist. I will gladly seek your advice, but considering our differences of opinion on basic questions I cannot allow you to make independent political decisions provided that His Majesty the Emperor and King leaves me in my current position."¹²⁶

Under pressure from the military, the central authorities of the Reich came down on von Trotha's side. Leutwein was granted the home leave which he had requested. In a sort of epilogue Leutwein pointed out once again the difference between his own policies towards the Africans and those pursued by von Trotha: "What distinguishes the General's policies *vis-à-vis* the natives from my own is spelled out in the letter you find enclosed. While my own approach is practicable, the General's is not. If I have so far relied too heavily on the native chiefs, this is because the realities of power have forced me to do so. Now that these have changed, I would, of course, change my policies, too. But I feel there is no need for a policy of extermination—not because I am sentimental about the native population, but because I have our own cause in mind. Indeed, I deem it economically harmful and militarily impossible to destroy the indigenous people, and especially a tribe as vigorous and viable as the Herero. The General's standpoint is that of a brave lieutenant, but not that of a colonizer."¹²⁷

Before long, it turned out that von Trotha had gained only a Pyrrhic victory.

A Pyrrhic Victory

In the latter half of November 1904 it became increasingly apparent that von Trotha's strategy had failed. The campaign against the Herero had ground to a halt. While Schlieffen continued to endorse von Trotha's policy of annihilation, he did not fail to recognize that the General was incapable of seeing his policy through to the end. With German imperialism in a painful dilemma, Schlieffen saw no other way out than to negotiate with the Herero after all. Conceding that the German strategy had been a total failure, he wrote to Prince Bülow, the Imperial Chancellor: "In all likelihood, our troops will be compelled, no matter whether the Herero are in the Omaheke or on British territory, to spread out in such a way as to prevent the enemy from returning westward, thereby making the war a protracted one, with all its attendant horrors such as typhoid, malaria and

heart ailments. That pressure is building up for a peace to be signed shortly is only understandable in the light of the prospects that lie ahead. To be sure, peace with insurgents can only mean their unconditional surrender. But as matters stand, neither the nation as a whole nor any section of it however small appears to be inclined to capitulate. The prisoners which Major von Estorff captured and released after fair treatment to persuade their fellow-tribesmen to place themselves under German protection have not returned. If the Herero fail to come of their own free will, they must be invited and encouraged to surrender. There can be no question of holding talks with the kapteins for this purpose. They have forfeited the right to live and must be eliminated if the situation is to be restored to anything like normal. General von Trotha, in setting a price on their heads, may well have done the right thing to get rid of them. The rewards offered appear to be inadequate and should, moreover, be expressed in terms of cattle rather than money as is the custom there. It will not be until the power of the kapteins has been broken that there is any chance of the Herero surrendering in large numbers.

"What prevents events from taking such a turn is the measures taken by General von Trotha as set out in the two documents enclosed [extract from a report dated 4 October and proclamation dated 2 October]. His plans to wipe out the entire nation or to drive them out of the country are meeting with our approval. After all that has happened it will be very difficult for blacks and whites to co-exist unless the former are permanently kept in a state of forced labour, i.e. a state of quasi-slavery. The racial struggle that has erupted can be brought to an end only by destroying one side or reducing it to serfdom. The latter proposition is an unrealistic one, given the views that are prevalent. *So while General von Trotha's intentions are commendable, he is powerless to carry them out.* [My emphasis-H. D.] He will have to stop on the western fringe of the Omaheke, unable to force the Herero to leave it. If, on the other hand, they were to withdraw from the country voluntarily, this would be of little avail. They would pose a constant threat from Bechuanaland unless the Cape Government were prepared and able to clip their wings.

"We will have no choice, therefore, but to try to induce the Herero to surrender. This is complicated by General von Trotha's order to shoot each and every Herero. The Herero will hardly trust us if we issue a new proclamation with a pledge that anyone who gives himself up to our troops will be spared. And yet we must do just this. In sum, I believe that General von Trotha should be instructed (i) to set a higher price on the heads of the kapteins and leaders and (ii) to make a promise to spare the Herero who surrender to our troops by issuing a new proclamation or in some other appropriate way."¹²⁸

Under the impact of this report, the Imperial Chancellor asked the Kaiser for permission to revoke von Trotha's proclamation of 2 October. In his message to Wilhelm II, Bülow listed four reasons for doing so as rapidly as possible. He said that the General's intention to shoot all Herero men and to drive women and children back into the Omaheke sandveld was inconsistent with the principles of

Christianity and humanity—a somewhat belated discovery. His second argument, the crucial one, was that von Trotha's plans were impossible to put into effect. Thirdly, he pointed out that the measures envisaged by the Commander-in-Chief were absurd from an economic point of view, a fact that was to be recognized more and more as time wore on. He observed: "Furthermore, if the rebellious natives were annihilated or expelled, this would seriously undermine the colony's potential for development. The natives are indispensable for the planting of crops, the keeping of livestock and the mining operations in the Protectorate as well. The eradication of the indigenous population would leave us with graver problems on our hands than Britain is facing in the mining districts of South Africa. England will welcome the Herero crossing over into British territory as a valuable source of labour whereas all that we shall have won at such unparalleled cost of blood and treasure will be a country partly deprived of its productive forces." His fourth and final point was that the proclamation was "demeaning to our standing among the civilized nations of the world." For all these reasons Bülow asked to be empowered to "instruct General von Trotha by cable to issue a new proclamation to the effect that he would spare the lives of all the Herero who surrendered to our troops of their own free will, with the exception of ringleaders and others directly responsible, and to do everything in his power to bring about the speedy surrender of the Herero within the limits set by the need to preserve German authority and to ensure lasting peace."¹²⁹

By all accounts, Wilhelm II seemed extremely reluctant to depart from von Trotha's policy of extermination. After five days of hesitation he ultimately decided that von Trotha should be directed "to raise the price set on the heads of the Herero kapteins, to show mercy to the Herero ready to surrender and to bring this to their notice in an appropriate manner."¹³⁰

Since the text of the telegram fell short of the Chancellor's expectations, Bülow urged the Emperor to give explicit instructions to von Trotha to spare the lives of those Herero who would give themselves up. He also advised him against increasing the rewards for the time being. Another eight days elapsed before Wilhelm II finally gave his assent to the proposed text.

Von Trotha was beside himself with anger when he learned that his policy had been reversed. For several days he refused to cooperate, putting his own construction on the telegram he had received. On 9 December he declared that he had given orders to Estorff to open negotiations with the Herero. This brought the following response from the General Staff: "Negotiations are out of the question. We advise you to act in accordance with the order of H. M. the Emperor."¹³¹ He also "inferred" from his instructions that he would have to tell the Herero that they would no longer be fired upon. But the General Staff cleared up this point post-haste: "His Majesty has not forbidden you to fire on the Herero. On the contrary, he expects the proposed offensive to be launched after the onset of the rainy season. But the possibility of showing mercy, ruled out by the proclamation of 2 October, is . . . to be restored again."¹³²

One passage in the telegram infuriated von Trotha more than any other: a recommendation to rely on the "good offices" of the Mission. This signalled a major shift in the German Government's policy towards the Rhenish Missionary Society, which after the outbreak of the Herero uprising had been the target of strident attacks. Bülow, too, had been among its critics. But in late 1904 it dawned on him that it might be better for German imperialism to resume the tried and tested policy of cooperation with the Mission. Such an about-turn was not too difficult to effect because the Mission, notwithstanding the attacks to which it had been subjected, had repeatedly offered to help the Government gather together the surviving Herero. They had done so less out of a concern for the well-being of the Herero than with their own future in mind. Indeed, if von Trotha was allowed to continue his policy of extermination, the discontinuation of all missionary work was only a question of time.

Von Trotha had never tried to conceal his animosity towards the Mission, which he felt could only impede his efforts to wipe out the Herero nation. In a newspaper article he said later that in his eyes the Mission had "failed dismally" because it had not prevented the outbreak of the Herero rebellion. This, he said, had been the reason why he had ignored the Mission's repeated offers to assist him. Letters in which the missionaries offered their services had allegedly never reached him ("due to *force majeure*") and he had learned about their content only belatedly through the Colonial Department. However this may be, he hastened to add, they would not have prompted him to change his mind "on the grounds that I find the ideas and principles put forward in the second letter just as abhorrent."¹³³ To be on the safe side, von Trotha had even asked Berlin whether the Kaiser approved of his uncompromising attitude. As he never received an answer, he concluded that his views were "sanctioned by His Majesty".

The great about-turn came in December 1904 when the Emperor instructed Trotha to cooperate with the Mission. Chancellor von Bülow tried to sweeten the pill somewhat by pointing out that he expected him to do so not in order to establish reserves, but to set up "*concentration camps* [My emphasis-H. D.] where the rest of the Herero people would be placed and kept for the time being."¹³⁴

After having received the cable, von Trotha made contact with the Rhenish Missionary Society. There followed a conversation in which the missionaries declared, as von Trotha reported, that "they would send letters to the Herero kapteins and induce them to persuade their people to lay down their arms and to return to their old hunting grounds under the guiding hand of the Church." The General rejected this offer and mapped out his own strategy: "Those of the Herero who are ready to lay down their arms will be transported back to areas far removed from the front line. There they . . . will be put in irons and employed as labour."¹³⁵

The measures envisaged by von Trotha were unlikely to cause the surviving Herero to surrender. In a telegram addressed to the Reich Cancellor he asked for instructions 'as to how the Herero who will give themselves up in large numbers

are to be made to turn in their weapons. I have given orders to tell the people that unless they indicate the sites where they have buried their weapons and ammunition—which can be taken for granted—one of them will be shot by firing squad every week until they disclose the hiding places.”¹³⁰

In another cable to the Chancellor, von Trotha announced: “I intend to have identification tags inscribed G. H. fastened permanently to prisoners of both sexes.”¹³⁷ (The letters stand for *Gefangene Hereros*, i. e. captured Herero.)

While Prince Bülow had no objections to the latter proposal, he said that, as far as the shooting of Herero was concerned, the General would have to take such measures at his peril.

An account of the operation undertaken by the military and the Mission to herd the surviving Herero tribesmen into concentration camps will be given later. Let us now turn our attention to the fate of the Herero whom von Trotha had driven into the Omaheka sandveld. Only a tiny fraction of them escaped alive. For the few thousand survivors there were three main directions in which to flee: (i) eastward, i.e. into Bechuanaland, which was British territory; (ii) westward, i.e. back into Hereroland across the German lines; and (iii) northward, i.e. into Ovambo territory.

Efforts to escape eastward are the best documented.¹³⁸ Approximately 1,000 Herero reached Bechuanaland. The greater part of them arrived there by way of Rietfontein and were settled by the British at Nuchei near the border. The group comprised 210 men, 251 women and 246 children. The best-known Herero leaders in this group were Traugott (Tjetjo's son), Justus Kavizeri and Willi Maharero, one of Samuel's nephews. Another group of 200-odd Herero, among them Samuel Maharero and three of his sons, reached British territory via Neinci. They settled at Tsau on the shores of Lake Ngami. Neither group crossed the border in a body, rather they arrived in bands of two, three, or twenty at the most. The British did not assist them in any way. And Sechome, supreme chief of the Tswana, considered them to be unwanted immigrants. Consequently, the Herero were doomed to a miserable existence. There were no longer any kapteins and headmen because Sechome was against this. Samuel Maharero, too, had to lead life of an ordinary Herero.

The bulk of the survivors attempted to flee in a westerly direction as they did not want to leave their homeland. Individuals and small groups managed to slip through the German lines to make their way back to Hereroland proper. Having withdrawn to the most inhospitable parts of the territory, they were subsisting on a diet of water, roots and berries. From time to time, German troops mounted explicit campaigns of annihilation against these Herero whose exact number is unknown but of whom there seem to have been several thousands. The official communications that were published invariably contain the stereotyped phrase that so and so many *werfs* were raided and so and so many Herero killed in the process. Part of these “Field Herero” were later herded into German concentration camps whereas another section succeeded in escaping capture by the Germans during the

years of the uprising, many of them reduced to skeletons as a result of the harsh conditions under which they were compelled to live.

An odyssey of a most remarkable kind is associated with Michael from Omaruru, who managed to reach British territory together with Samuel Maharero. Finding the living conditions at Tsau not to his liking, he decided to traverse the Omaheke Desert a second time to get back to Hereroland.¹³⁹ He crossed the whole of South West Africa from the extreme east to the extreme west, and throughout the year 1905 stayed in Hereroland, unnoticed by the Germans. Apparently because he saw no chance of resuming the struggle against the Germans, he then entered British territory a second time near Walvis Bay in December 1905. From there he was shipped to Cape Town along with another 200 Herero who had also contrived to flee to Walvis Bay.

The third possibility was to escape northward into Ovambo territory. One of those who succeeded in doing this was Daniel Kariko, subchief of the Herero from Okombahe.¹⁴⁰ A number of Herero who had originally lived in the Waterberg also got as far as Amboland. No figures are available to indicate the total number of those who managed to do so.

German imperialism crushed the Herero uprising by committing genocide. How many Herero survived the German policy of extermination is a point that will be taken up later.

Notes

- 1 The only author to mention this important fact is Hallgarten. Cf. Hallgarten, G. W. F., *Imperialismus vor 1914*, Vol. 2, Munich, 1951, p. 30.
- 2 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1659, p. 42, Otavigesellschaft to Leutwein, 26 May 1903.
- 3 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1660, p. 28, Statement of Samuel Maharero and others, 10 July 1903.
- 4 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1660, p. 29, Leutwein to Hansemann, 17 July 1903. Leutwein, the alleged opponent of big business interests, concluded his letter by expressing hopes for "lasting business ties with the well-financed Discontogesellschaft."
- 5 One of the few to recognize the connection between the construction of the Otavi railway and the Herero uprising was F. J. von Bülow. He wrote in a memorandum for the Col. Dept.: "More recently, the projected building of a railway from Omaruru to Otavi has been seen here as the writing on the wall, as a kind of new Moloch, the Herero fearing that this new and most unwelcome token of civilization, which would cut through their land in a north-easterly direction, would result in vast stretches of land being given away at their expense." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2115, p. 91, F. J. von Bülow, *Der Ursprung des Hereroaufstandes*, 17 June 1904.
- 6 The missionary, Elger, wrote for example: "The underlying reason for the resentment which the Herero bear against the Germans is that the average German here looks upon and treats the natives as creatures being more or less on the same level as baboons (their favourite word to describe the natives) and deserving to exist only insofar as they are of some benefit to the white man. Consequently, the whites value their horses and oxen more

- highly than they do the natives. Such a mentality breeds harshness, deceit, exploitation, injustice, rape and, not infrequently, murder as well." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, pp. 80-2, missionary Elger to the Rhenish Missionary Society, 10 Feb. 1904.
- 7 "Paternal chastisement" was used as a euphemism for flogging or whipping in the German colonies. Cf. Müller Fritz., ed., *Kolonien unter der Peitsche. Eine Dokumentation*, Berlin, 1962, pp. 88 ff. Even the missionaries were in favour of corporal punishment. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 158 ff.
 - 8 Dr. Menze, a specialist in tropical medicine, had this to say on the matter: "Never and nowhere have I come across a case of 'tropical frenzy', a disease which figures prominently in lurid newspaper stories about life in the colonies. There is no known condition that would warrant the use of such a term. 'Tropical frenzy' has been invented by laymen, by non-medical people, for the specific purpose of being used as either incriminating or exonerating evidence, depending on your position in a dispute. It is quite natural that there should be a disproportionate number of people with a fiery temperament among Europeans living in faraway colonies because less adventurous people tend to prefer the more comfortable life at home. Those of weak character are more likely to be shaken out of their moral equilibrium out in the bush than here in Europe where the law can be relied upon to protect them and a code of good behaviour imposes strict limitations on their way of life. People susceptible to 'tropical frenzy' have a propensity to commit acts of brutality even at the North Pole, once the straitjacket of civilization woven of a thousand restrictions is relaxed." Menze, C. A., *Tropische Gesundheitslehre und Heilkunde*, Berlin, 1902, pp. 22 ff., quoted in Horbach, Philipp, 'Reichskanzler, Missionare und Herero-Aufstand', in *Die Reformation*, Vol. 3, 1904, p. 354.
 - 9 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2115, pp. 61-7, Leutwein to the Col. Dept., 17 May 1904, and Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, Berlin, 1906, p. 242.
 - 10 The missionary, Irle, reported that during the years leading up to the uprising the Herero had declared time and again: "We have become slaves." Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, pp. 4-7, Missionary Irle to Stuebel, 12 April 1904.
 - 11 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2116, pp. 121-7, Leutwein, *The Historical Development of the Protectorate and its Relevance for the Herero Uprising*, Sept. 1904.
 - 12 This was confirmed by Governor Leutwein: "Throughout the years I have spent in the Protectorate, not a single case of rape has been brought to the notice of the authorities, although it cannot be denied that sexual relations between whites and natives are common." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2115, pp. 61-7, Leutwein to the Col. Dept, 17 May 1904.
 - 13 *Berner Tagwacht*, No. 75, 18 Sept. 1901. Incidentally, this article prompted the Col. Dept. to invite the District Officer and the Imperial Railway Authority at Swakopmund to make a report on the incident. In separate reports, both confirmed that the incident had taken place, but said it had been so commonplace that they had not deemed it worthy of note.
 - 14 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 941, p. 169, Memorandum prepared by the Col. Dept. for the Imperial Chancellor, Aug. 1906. Cf. also *Tägliche Rundschau*, 28 Dec. 1899.
 - 15 Cf. *Report*, p. 54. The testimony given by the son of Herero Chief Zacharias of Otjimbingwe confirms that it was largely the callous murder of the chief's daughter-in-law which prompted him to start the uprising. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 55.
 - 16 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2116, pp. 148-9, Catalogue of white persons against whom legal proceedings were instituted at the Imperial District Court in Swakopmund on charges of assault and battery against natives in 1902, 1903 and 1904.

- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2116, p. 151. Supplement to a list of penalties imposed in Windhoek district 1901-04 on charges of assault and battery against natives.
- 19 Cf. *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung*, 18 Dec. 1902, and *Nationalzeitung*, 19 Aug. 1904. Cf. also *Kolonien unter der Peitsche*, *op. cit.*, pp. 165 ff.
- 20 Cf. ZKKK, Vol. 8, 1906, p. 832. This "argument" was advanced to underline the need for a larger colonial army. There can, in fact, be no doubt that the absence of the bulk of the military force hastened the outbreak of the rebellion.
- 21 Rohrbach, Paul, *Dernburg und die Südafrikaner*, Berlin, 1911, p. 329.
- 22 Cf., e.g., *Die Ursachen des Herero-Aufstandes und die Entschädigungsansprüche der Ansiedler, dargestellt von der Ansiedler-Abordnung*, Berlin, 1904, or DKZ, Vol. 21, 1904, pp. 234 ff. Even more explicit is Rohrbach, Paul, *op. cit.*, p. 330, who has the interests of the farmers at heart.
- 23 DKG No. 473, p. 386, published in DKZ, Vol. 21, 1904, p. 163.
- 24 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 31.
- 25 Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, p. 466.
- 26 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2113, pp. 165-6, Stuebel to Bülow, 14 April 1904.
- 27 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, pp. 12-13, Bülow to Wilhelm II, 18 April 1904.
- 28 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, p. 38, Telegram of Wilhelm II to Bülow, 19 April 1904. The Kaiser's viewpoint that the uprising should be "relentlessly suppressed" before investigating its causes was also shared by the DKZ. Cf. DKZ, Vol. 21, 1904, p. 123.
- 29 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2115, p. 119, Tattenbach to Bülow, 1 July 1904.
- 30 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2112, pp. 42-3, Richtshofen to Wolff-Metternich (German Ambassador in London), 29 Feb. 1904.
- 31 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2111, p. 207, Büchsel (Chief of the Naval Staff) to the Emperor, 10 Feb. 1904 (Top secret).
- 32 *Ibid.*
- 33 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2112, p. 2, Leutwein to the Imperial Chancellor, 15 Feb. 1904.
- 34 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2111, p. 226, Leutwein to the General Staff in Berlin, 17 Feb. 1904. A few days later Leutwein sent off another cable to justify his actions: "Hewitt was arrested on my orders under martial law because there were clear signs that he was fomenting trouble and that he might attempt to flee." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2112, p. 40, Leutwein to the Ger. For. Off., 22 Feb. 1904.
- 35 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2112, p. 157, the German Ambassador in London to Bülow, 1 March 1904.
- 36 Cf. Horbach, Philipp, *op. cit.*, p. 344.
- 37 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2113, p. 98, missionary Fritz Meier to the Imperial Administration in Windhoek, 16 Feb. 1904.
- 38 Cf. Horbach, Philipp, *op. cit.* It was later established by a law court that "no shots were fired on the fastness from the house of the Mission or the roof thereof." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2118, p. 58, Finding of the Court of the High Command of the Protective Force, 28 Feb. 1905.
- 39 The missionary, Diehl, related this episode as follows in a letter to his relatives: "We have not been molested in the least by our Herero. [At this point someone at the Col. Dept. added: 'Our Herero - incredible!'] They did not fire a single shot at our house. We had nothing to fear from them. It was safe for us to pace up and down the area in front of the house that was within the range of their rifles. Things were quite different on

- the opposite side where our German fellow countrymen were firing away. We could venture there only at the risk of our lives, although the house was well outside the line of fire and no shot was ever fired from there or nearby. . . . One bullet penetrated my study, embedding itself in the wall above the desk at which I used to do my writing. If I had been sitting there, as I had the day before at this time of day, I would now be a dead man. The bullet would have gone straight through my head." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2118, p. 27. From a private letter of the missionary Diehl to his relatives, 24 Jan. 1904.
- 40 Cf. Horbach, Philipp, *op. cit.*, p. 346, and Schmidt, Max, *Aus unserem Kriegesleben in Südwestafrika*, Berlin, 1907, p. 49.
- 41 Cf. e.g. Bayer, M., *Mit dem Hauptquartier in Südwestafrika*, 2nd edition, Leipzig, 1909, pp. 19 and 33; *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika, auf Grund amtlichen Materials bearbeitet von der Kriegsgeschichtlichen Abteilung I des Grossen Generalstabes*, Vol. 1, Berlin, 1906, p. 95; DKBI, Vol. 15, 1904, pp. 357 ff. and 360.
- 42 *Der Reichsbote*, No. 69, 22 March 1904. Only a week later the newspaper began to speak of a *national uprising* of the Herero. Cf. *ibid.*, No. 78, 1 April 1904.
- 43 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, pp. 4-7, Irlé to Stuebel, 12 April 1904.
- 44 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2115, pp. 61-7, Leutwein to the Col. Dept, 17 May 1904.
- 45 *Flugblätter des Deutschen Kolonial-Bundes*, IX: 'Zu dem Unruhen in Deutsch-Südwestafrika', in Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2111, p. 26.
- 46 *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, No. 314, 8 July 1904. The article quoted from is a review of a book published anonymously under the title *Musste es sein?* The book contained scathing attacks on Leutwein's policies. The Governor later pointed out that the book had been written by the mother of Lieutenant Jobit, whose inept handling of the affair with the kaptein of the Bondelswarts had provoked the uprising of that tribe in the autumn of 1903. Cf. Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, p. 430n.
- 47 There can be little doubt that it was under pressure from his headmen that Samuel Maharero gave the order to take up arms. Among those of the Herero leaders who had from the first been determined to fight their German colonial masters and who had severely criticized the feeble policy of collaboration of their Supreme Chief, Subchief Atta Riarua deserves to be singled out for special mention. Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2112, p. 124, Dr. Fuchs to the Col. Dept. 29 Jan. 1904. It is a well-known fact that meetings attended by all Herero kaptains were held in the course of 1903. One such gathering, lasting at least four weeks, took place at Okahandja, Samuel Maharero's residence, in April and May 1903. Cf. *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 19 Jan. 1904. Leutwein, having been invited by the Col. Dept. to report upon that meeting, claimed it had merely served to settle inheritance claims, but it is reasonably safe to assume that the possibility of an uprising was already discussed on that occasion.
- 48 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, pp. 21-2, Samuel Maharero to Hendrik Witbooi, n.d.
- 49 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, p. 19, Samuel Maharero to Hermanus van Wyk, n.d.
- 50 *Report*, p. 58.
- 51 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, p. 23, Samuel Maharero to Hendrik Witbooi, 11 Jan. 1904, given in Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, p. 468.
- 52 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, pp. 21-2, Samuel Maharero to Hendrik Witbooi, n. d., given by Leutwein, Theodor, in *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, but in an edited version omitting most of the passages quoted here and, in the final section, the list of the Herero chiefs having joined in the uprising. Incidentally, the version of the letter found among the files is not complete, either, as it does not include the opening passage.

- 53 Leutwein observed in respect of these four letters: "The letters purport to come from the Supreme Chief, Samuel. The originals, however, do not bear the signature of the Supreme Chief, whose handwriting is familiar to me. Rather, it would appear they have been signed by the authors of the letters, probably a schoolmaster trained by the missionaries. For all this, it is safe to say that the letters have not been written and despatched without the Supreme Chief's consent." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, p. 18, Leutwein to the Col. Dept., 14 March 1904.
- 54 Cf. Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, op. cit., p. 492: "What doubtless saved us from disaster at the beginning of the Herero uprising was that they [the Herero and Nama - H. D.] were kept from joining forces for nine months, i. e. until the month of October 1904."
- 55 *Report*, p. 57.
- 56 Rohrbach, Paul, *Dernburg und die Südwestafrikaner*, op. cit., p. 340.
- 57 Bayer, M., *Mit dem Hauptquartier in Südwestafrika*, op. cit., p. 2.
- 58 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2111, p. 40, Telegram of the Commandant of Swakopmund to the Ger. For. Office, 19 Jan. 1904.
- 59 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2112, pp. 60-86, Solioz to Golinelli, 19 Jan. 1904.
- 60 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2111, p. 165, Gudewill to the Imperial Naval Office, 4 Feb. 1904. In his telegram Gudewill also gave expression to German imperialism's longstanding ambition to "round off" South West Africa by incorporating Southern Angola. He wrote: "It should be examined whether Portuguese territory may be occupied with Portugal's permission to seal off the northern border. This is something Portugal will hardly be in a position to do on her own. It could be the prelude to gradually rounding off the Protectorate by incorporating Porto Alexandre."
- 61 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2117, p. 58, from a secret report of Count Georg von Stillfried und Rattonitz to Wilhelm II, n.d.
- 62 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, pp. 80-2, missionary Elger to the Rhenish Missionary Society, 10 Feb. 1904.
- 63 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2117, pp. 63-5, Plantation owner Eismann (Germann East Africa) to Bulow, n.d. (letter received 6 Jan. 1905). Commenting on Eismann's proposal that "all men, women and children involved in the rebellion ought to be shipped to German East Africa", Golinelli noted: "We should be happy to keep a few in South West Africa."
- 64 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, p. 116, Col. Dept. to Leutwein, 5 May 1904.
- 65 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, p. 124, Leutwein to the Col. Dept., 6 May 1904.
- 66 *Der Reichsbote*, No. 69, 22 March 1904.
- 67 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2133, pp. 107-8, Otto Seifert to Wilhelm II, 17 Oct. 1904.
- 68 The route chosen for his return journey drew the following scathing remark from Kaiser Wilhelm II: "I would rather he had marched northward with his force to direct the attack aimed at relieving Windhoek." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2153, p. 131.
- 69 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2113, pp. 89-90, Leutwein to the Col. Dept., 23 Feb. 1904.
- 70 *Ibid.*
- 71 This was a widespread assumption among the German military (Cf. e.g. Erffa, Burkhardt Freiherr von, *Reise- und Kriegsbilder von Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, Halle, 1905, p. 72).
- 72 Cf. *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, Vol. 1, pp. 66 ff.
- 73 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 113 ff.
- 74 Engelbrechten, A. von, 'Der Krieg in Deutsch-Südwestafrika', in ZKKK, Vol. 8, 1906, p. 57.

- 75 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 64.
- 76 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, p. 52, Leturwein to the General Staff, 25 April 1904.
- 77 Cf. e.g. Itle, J., *Die Herero. Ein Beitrag zur Landes-, Volks- und Missionskunde*, Gütersloh, 1906, p. 213, and Rohrbach, Paul, *Dernburg und die Südwestafrikaner*, *op. cit.*, p. 332.
- 78 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1228, p. 105, Johannesburg Consulate to Bülow, 14 Aug. 1905.
- 79 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2115, pp. 61-7, Leturwein to the Col. Dept. 17 May 1904. In this despatch Leturwein also expressly mentioned the grossly exaggerated reports in the press.
- 80 Cf. e.g. Sonnenberg, Else, *Wie es am Waterberg zugeing. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Hereroaufstandes*, Berlin 1905. The author relates, among other things, that German women and children as well as the missionary, Eich, were allowed to accompany the Herero on a six-week trek from the Waterberg to the Okahandja region. To mark his "gratitude," the missionary, on arriving at the German lines, betrayed everything he had observed during his journey. Mrs. Sonnenberg recounted that Colonel Leturwein "was apprised by the missionary in great detail of all he had learned about the enemy's military capabilities and positions." *Ibid.*, p. 112.
- 81 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2115, pp. 16-18, extract from a report of the missionary Hammann (Otjihaenena), *n.d.*
- 82 Cf. Noske, Gustav, *Kolonialpolitik und Sozialdemokratie*, Stuttgart, 1914, p. 110.
- 83 DKZ, Vol. 21, 1904, p. 110. In fact, the DKZ made nonsense of its claim when in May 1904 it published a letter from a certain Dr. Reinecke saying that "no prisoners have been taken as yet." *Ibid.*, p. 203.
- 84 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2115, pp. 61-7, Leturwein to the Col. Dept., 17 May 1904.
- 85 *Ibid.* Daniel Esma Dixon, a European-born resident of Omaruru engaged in goods transports for the Germans at the time of the uprising, later testified under oath: "During much of the uprising I was in Okahandja supervising the unloading of goods. Hangings of Africans were a daily occurrence there. A German officer was empowered to order an African to be hanged without investigation and legal proceedings. Many of those sent to the gallows were merely suspected of wrongdoing. On a single day I saw seven Herero strung up in a row, and on other days they were hanged in twos or threes. . . . All this took place in public, with the bodies remaining there until the next day as a warning to the other Africans." *Report*, p. 66.
- 86 The Otjimbingwe tribe, coming from the area south of the railway line, crossed the line with about 5,000 head of cattle on the night of 28 March, to join forces with Samuel Maharero. Incidentally, the Herero were severely hampered in their movements by the women, children and animals accompanying them. (Cf. Deimling, B. von, *Aus der alten in die neue Zeit. Lebenserinnerungen*, Berlin, 1930, p. 62).
- 87 For details about the trek southward undertaken by the Herero under David to join up with Samuel Maharero see Sonnenberg, Else, *op. cit.*, pp. 95 ff.
- 88 Jacob, E. G., ed. *Deutsche Kolonialpolitik in Dokumenten*, Leipzig, 1938, p. 292.
- 89 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, pp. 138-9, Trotha to Bülow, 6 Jan. 1905.
- 90 "I have returned to Windhoek to assume my administrative duties. At Okahandja I reached full agreement (*sic*) with Herr von Trotha. I shall go to Namaqualand in August to pacify the area." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2115, p. 77, Leturwein to the Ger. For. Off., 25 June 1904.
- 91 Rohrbach reported that during the first phase of the war against the Herero, when Letur-

- wein was in command, the chief purpose of German operations was to capture cattle. Cf. Rohrbach, Paul, *Dernburg*, *op. cit.*, pp. 340 ff.
- 92 Cf. Schnee, Heinrich, ed., *Deutscher Kolonial-Lexikon*, Vol. 3, Leipzig, 1920, pp. 543 ff.
- 93 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, pp. 100-2, Trotha to Leutwein, 5. Nov. 1904.
- 94 *Ibid.*
- 95 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1661, p. 81. Business report of the Otavigesellschaft for its 4th financial year (1903-04). It emerges from the records of the Imperial Colonial Office that the 600-odd Herero were first interned aboard a steamship of the Woermann Line riding at anchor off Swakopmund. Since these Herero were considered a nuisance and it was feared that they might escape and join the insurgents, 282 of them were deported to Cape Colony to work in the mines there.
- 96 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1661, p. 18, and Jäckel, Herbert, *Die Landgesellschaften in den deutschen Schutzgebieten*, Jena, 1909, pp. 226 ff. The sum of 1.75 million Marks – roughly one-tenth of the projected overall cost – was a gift (paid for by the German taxpayer) made to the Otavigesellschaft, a company largely controlled by the Discontogesellschaft, for speeding up the construction of the railway.
- 97 "I will ... attack the enemy simultaneously with all the forces under my command to destroy him." *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 153.
- 98 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 153 ff. and 157.
- 99 *Deutsche Kolonialpolitik in Dokumenten*, p. 294.
- 100 *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 132.
- 101 *Ibid.*, p. 207.
- 102 Cf. e.g. Schlosser, Katesa, 'Die Herero im Britisch-Betschuanaland-Protektorat und ein Besuch in einer ihrer Siedlungen: Nwene-le-tau', in *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Vol. 80, No. 2, 1955, p. 205: "The battle of the Waterberg on 11 and 12 August 1904 settled the outcome of the Herero uprising against German colonial rule in South West Africa through the annihilation of the mass of the Herero people and their allies, the Mbanderu."
- 103 Cf. Rohrbach, Paul, *Dernburg und die Südwestafrikaner*, *op. cit.*, p. 357.
- 104 Governor Leutwein's son, who had taken part in the war in South West Africa as an army lieutenant, later summed up his views about the matter as follows: "Not even the campaign of annihilation in the sandveld could be considered a military measure. It was not a matter of military necessity to hound the leaderless and defenceless Herero to the point of extinction. On the other hand, the Government had a vital interest in ending a war that had become an absurdity in order to save whatever it could in terms of manpower for the Protectorate." *Deutsche Kolonialpolitik in Dokumenten*, *op. cit.*, p. 296.
- 105 *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 189.
- 106 *Ibid.*
- 107 *Vorwärts*, No. 294, 16 Dec. 1905 [This writer's emphasis – H. D.].
- 108 Gen. von Trotha and his accomplices took good care not to report their "exploits" to Berlin. Yet the official files included a letter from a missionary in which he said, *inter alia*: "Most of the prisoners are said to have been gunned down while being pursued in the sandveld." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2118, pp. 92-3, extract from a letter of the missionary Kuhlmann, 16 Feb. 1905.
- 109 There are sporadic references to the killing of male Herero in German sources. Cf. e.g. Frenssen, Gustav, *Peter Moors Fahrt nach Südwest*, Berlin, n.d., pp. 164 ff., 176, and 189 ff. Although Gustav Frenssen's book is fiction, it is based on reports of persons with first-hand experience of the war, providing an unvarnished account of the events in South

West Africa. Some German publications dealing with the war in South West Africa seem to have been written for the sole purpose of demonstrating the "humane" methods of warfare employed by the Germans – against the better judgement of their authors. Cf. e.g. Bayer, M., *Mit dem Hauptquartier in Südwestafrika*, p. 164, and pp. 189 ff.

110 *Report*, p. 64.

111 *Ibid.*, p. 65.

112 *Ibid.* Cf. also *Cape Argus*, 25 and 28 Sept. 1905, reporting a large number of similar episodes.

113 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, p. 107, Schlieffen to Bülow, 16 Dec. 1904.

114 Trotha, 'Politik und Kriegführung', in *Berliner Neueste Nachrichten*, No. 60, 3 Feb. 1909.

115 Cf. e.g. Isle, J., *Was soll aus den Herero werden?* Gütersloh, 1906.

116 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2117, pp. 112–6, Lieutenant von Beesten to the General Staff, n.d.

117 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2118, pp. 92–3. Extract from a letter of the missionary Kuhlmann, 16 Feb. 1905.

118 Cf. *Report*, pp. 59 ff.

119 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2117, pp. 112–6, Lieutenant von Beesten to the General Staff, n.d.

120 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, p. 105. Memorandum drawn up by Golinelli for the Imperial Chancellor, 24 Dec. 1904. One fact illustrating this is that Wilhelm Maharero, who first intended to surrender to the German troops in January 1905, changed his mind at the last moment. Asked on British-ruled territory six months later why he had not surrendered to the Germans, he told Lieutenant Streirwolf, the District Officer of Gobabis, that he had "feared the Ombakaha affair might repeat itself." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2118, pp. 179–82, 'Report of Lieutenant Streirwolf on a journey to the British Lake Ngami district, 24 Aug. 1905', published in DKBl, Vol. 16, 1905, pp. 707 ff., but in a version which, significantly, omits the sentence quoted here.

121 These hangings, which are not mentioned in any German account, including the study by the General Staff, gave rise to the following comment in *The Owl*, a newspaper published in Cape Colony: "At Osombo-Windimbe, on the morning of 3 October, H. E. General von Trotha consoled himself for his futile pursuit of the Herero by ordering a number of natives, who had been picked up by patrols, to be hanged." Returning to this subject somewhat later, the paper wrote: "Before his departure, captured natives were hanged in a wild outburst of savage fury. The women were forced to watch every detail of the executions and then chased away to tell their compatriots about this demonstration of German might." *The Owl*, Vol. 17, No. 441, 18 Nov. 1904, retranslated from a German version prepared for the Col. Dept. in: Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, pp. 68–73.

122 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, pp. 5–6, Trotha to the Army Chief of Staff, 4 Oct. 1904.

123 Trotha, *Politik und Kriegführung*, loc. cit. In this article Trotha also spelled out the conditions under which he believed negotiations would have been possible: encirclement and unconditional surrender of the enemy. This, he said, "would have made it possible to negotiate and to set up a duly constituted court which would have sent the murderers and ringleaders to the gallows which they so richly deserved, placed the rifles and cattle in the hands of the government and brought the rest of the tribesmen back under the benign rule of His Imperial Majesty." M. J. Bonn, in a sarcastic newspaper article,

- scornfully rejected General von Trotha's attempts to provide a pseudo-scientific rationale for his policy of extermination. Cf. Bonn, M. J., 'Die wissenschaftliche Begründung der Trothaschen Eingeborenenpolitik', in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, No. 45, 14 Sept. 1909.
- 124 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, p. 29, Trotha to Leutwein, 27 Oct. 1904.
- 125 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, p. 103, Trotha to the General Staff, 28 Oct. 1904. Trotha quotes Leutwein's telegram in this letter.
- 126 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, pp. 100-2, Trotha to Leutwein, 5 Nov. 1904.
- 127 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, pp. 98-9, Leutwein to the Col. Dept, 12 Nov. 1904. Paul Rohrbach, whose sympathies lay with Leutwein, later expressed the difference between Trotha's and Leutwein's policies with classic terseness: South West Africa *with* natives was of much greater value to us than *without* natives." Rohrbach, Paul, *Um der Teufels Handschrift*, Hamburg, 1953, p. 64.
- 128 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, pp. 3-4, Schlieffen to Bülow 23 Nov. 1904.
- 129 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, pp. 8-11, Bülow to Wilhelm II, 24 Nov. 1904.
- 130 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, p. 13, Minister Schoen to the Ger. For. Off., 29 Nov. 1904.
- 131 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 208, p. 83, General Staff to Trotha, 10 Dec. 1904.
- 132 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, p. 85, General Staff to Trotha, 12 Dec. 1904.
- 133 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, pp. 138-9, Trotha to Bülow, 6 Jan. 1905.
- 134 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, p. 54, Bülow to Trotha, 11 Dec. 1904.
- 135 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, pp. 138-9, Trotha to Bülow, 6 Jan. 1905.
- 136 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, p. 120, Trotha to Bülow, 14 Jan. 1905.
- 137 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, pp. 122-3, Trotha to Bülow, 16 Jan. 1905.
- 138 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2118, pp. 179-82, Report of Lieutenant Streitwolf on a journey to the British Lake Ngami district, 24 Aug. 1905, published in part in KKBl, Vol. 16, 1905, pp. 707 ff.
- 139 This fact has only now come to light because the relevant sentence in Streitwolf's report ("The Herero eagerly enquired after Michael, kaptein of Omaruru, who had left Tsau for German territory.") was not published at the time. Therefore, the account given in Schlöter, Katesa, 'Die Herero im Britisch-Betschuanaland-Protektorat', *op. cit.*, p. 209, also needs correcting.
- 140 Cf. *Report*, p. 63. Daniel Kariko remained ten years with the Ovambo before it became possible for him to return to Hereroland in 1915, after the collapse of German rule over SWA. Cf. also DKZ, Vol. 21, 1904, which says on p. 502 that "Nechale, an Ovambo chief hostile to the Germans, has provided sanctuary for numerous Herero."

The Nama Uprising (1904-07)

The Situation in Namaland

In the closing stages of 1904 the German imperialists were suddenly faced with a radically changed situation when the Nama also rose up in arms. The colonial rulers were taken completely by surprise, as they had been earlier when the Herero had raised the standard of revolt.

At the beginning of the Herero uprising Maharero had vainly sought to enlist Hendrik Witbooi's support. Witbooi, rather than throw in his lot with the insurgents, actually made available a 100-strong contingent to fight on the German side as he had done in all previous conflicts between Germans and South West Africans over the past ten years. The Germans, having hurriedly made peace with the Bondelswarts, were thus able to concentrate on the struggle against the Herero. As a result, the central part and the northern half the country became embroiled in war whereas things remained calm in the south, at least for the time being.

Yet the calm was deceptive. Just as the Herero had been the targets of vicious attacks by the German settlers in Hereroland, so the Nama were pursued with rancorous hatred by the Germans in the south. There were constant threats that after the suppression of the Herero uprising the same treatment would be meted out to the Nama, and persistent demands that the Nama should be disarmed right away. It was but a small step to calls for the dismantling of tribes and the elimination of their kapteins. Such views were openly discussed in the *Deutsch-Südwest-afrikanische Zeitung* which German-speaking Nama were able to read. Captain von François, a brother of the one-time administrator of the "Protectorate", was even more outspoken in one of his letters: "We must not bury the hatchet until all tribes have been disarmed. We must also settle accounts with Hendrik Witbooi who, while hypocritically feigning friendship, seems to have been instrumental in fomenting the rebellion."¹ Senior officials of the Colonial Administration were also involved in the virulent campaign against the Nama. Theodor Leutwein's deputy, Hans Tecklenburg, declared: "The first essential for us is to stall for time so that we may subdue the southern tribes completely, with the exception of our avowed allies whose fate will be settled in the more distant future."² Angered by the bluntness of his deputy, the Governor noted disapprovingly: "Certain things such as our future intentions are better left unsaid."

Leutwein was fully alive to the dangers posed by the hate campaign against the Nama. He was by no means opposed to the designs of extremists, but he did not want to see them put into practice before the Herero uprising had been put down, because a war on two fronts might have had disastrous consequences for German imperialism. He tried to drive this point home to the editor of the *Deutsch-Südwestafrikanische Zeitung*, Wasserfall, by outlining the situation in the south as he perceived it: "Unlike you, I believe that this is not the moment to raise the native issue in general terms, rather this should be done after the suppression of the Herero rebellion. I want you, as the representative of public opinion, to know that this is my belief whatever may happen."³ Despite his intervention, the tenor of the paper remained the same.

What is more, the German settlers in Namaland attempted to force Leutwein to take immediate action against the Nama. They succeeded in winning over Friedrich von Lindequist, the German Consul-General in Cape Town, who was soon to become their spokesman. In his reports to the Reich Chancellor, Lindequist painted the situation in Namaland in the darkest colours. The response was not long in coming. Late in April, Oskar Stuebel, Director of the Colonial Department, asked Leutwein to initiate measures to "protect" the German settlers in Namaland. Stuebel's directive reads in part: "It is a matter of urgent necessity to consider ways of precluding once and for all the recurrence of events such as occurred in Hereroland of late. The feeling here is that this is hardly possible as long as the natives are left in possession of precision weapons. Therefore, the question might arise . . . of restricting the firearms the natives in the Protectorate may carry to muzzle-loaders. Since such a drastic measure appears to require a strong military presence, the troop reinforcements currently in the country would be of great help in carrying it out. No one here fails to recognize that the question is not easy to resolve given the need to show regard for the Hottentot tribes that have remained loyal to us. Please apprise me of the measures you intend to take along the lines suggested above."⁴

Leutwein neither could nor would disobey this directive and so he finally came around to the settlers' way of thinking. He set forth his plans in a report to the Colonial Department: "Both myself and the relevant district officer, von Burgsdorff, share the view that if Kaptein Witbooi were to die we could no longer count on the loyalty of the Witbooi tribe in the same way as before. We have repeatedly discussed this point and its implications, notably during the last campaign against the Bondelswarts. As regards the settlement of the native issue in Namaland, the Witbooi tribe will, therefore, be treated differently from the other Nama tribes only in so far as is necessary in deference to their venerable kaptein.

"I have in mind a settlement along the lines suggested in the Directive. The natives must be restricted to muzzle-loaders, and the tribal governments must be divested of all political power. They should have no other function than to maintain law and order among their own people. What title to give to the tribal leaders is a matter to be decided at some later stage. For several reasons, which I have set

out elsewhere, I feel that the time has not yet come to dispense with the tribal governments altogether, a step proposed by certain people who are not, however, in positions of authority. This is an objective, however, that may be pursued with the distant future in mind.

"What methods to use to enforce the settlement must be decided on a case-by-case basis. A different approach will have to be adopted to each kaptein and his tribesmen if a general uprising of the Hottentots is to be avoided. Given the inhospitable nature of the country such an insurrection would be even more difficult to cope with than the Herero uprising, except that indigenous auxiliary troops could make matters easier as has been repeatedly mentioned already. Hence the need to play off one tribe against another, which is a realistic proposition considering the money we would save if a general Hottentot uprising were prevented. Only someone thoroughly familiar with the country and its people such as district officer von Burgsdorff ought to be entrusted with this mission, should it be impossible for the Governor to perform this task himself. It will require patience and cautiousness. The order in which the various Hottentot tribes are disarmed should be determined by their degree of unreliability. So the Veldschoendragers ought to come first, followed by the Franzmann and Bethanie people and the Witboois. I have omitted the Bondelswarts and the Hoachanas Hottentots because these have already had their weapons taken away."⁵

Late in April Leutwein had asked for the German force in Namaland to be reinforced by 150 men "on political grounds". His request was granted, the Army Chief of Staff even making available a contingent of 300 men. Leutwein then made a final, but abortive attempt to exert a moderating influence on the settlers by telling the editor of the *Deutsch-Südwestafrikanische Zeitung* what measures he had taken. The Governor wrote that: "Out of consideration for the feelings of the white population in the south I have requested that two companies and one battery be put ashore in Lüderitz Bay in the month of June. I am quite aware that the situation holds grave dangers. The fear so far prevalent among the whites may now spread to the natives, especially if the former make imprudent and provocative remarks, so that ultimately their rifles may go off by themselves. But with the first shot being fired, the people tending our wagons, most of them Bastards and Nama, would get nervous and run away. This would also spell the end of the Herero war because no war can be fought without native servants. Consequently, I would prefer to see the settlement of the Hottentot question postponed until after the crushing of the Herero rebellion, but have been forced to take what may well have been precipitate action by the [white] population here."⁶

As it turned out, this step, too, was in vain. A couple of weeks later Leutwein had to inform the Colonial Department that the white population of Namaland "is continuing to make inflammatory speeches against the natives."⁷ The arrival of the troop reinforcements exacerbated tensions in the south still further. Not without reason, the Nama were afraid that the settlers might now carry out their threats.

Another circumstance which, as district officer, Schmidt reported to Leutwein

from Keetmanshoop, was fanning the Nama's suspicions was "that the land settlement scheduled to take place in May under the terms of the Peace of Kalkfontein is being deferred month after month. Even the least observant among the natives have a feeling that the Government wants to be through with the Herero first and then swoop down on the tribes in Namaland. They had been informed that the Bondelswarts' claims to land ownership would be settled once and for all in May, with the Governor and the district officer von Burgsdorff presiding and the kapteins also taking part in the proceedings. With that settlement put off time and again, they suspect that there will be a settling of accounts not only with the Bondelswarts, but with them, too."⁸

Jakob Morenga Opens Hostilities

The man who brought matters to a head was Jakob Morenga, who in late August resumed the struggle in the south, defeating a sizeable German patrol. But who was he?

Morenga was descended from a Nama man and a Herero woman. Little is known about his life and work before the uprising of the Bondelswarts in the autumn of 1903. Since in those days the only way open to Africans to acquire an education was to attend a mission school, Morenga chose that road, too. He is even said to have been taken to Europe by a missionary for 18 months. He was well-educated, being fluent in English, Afrikaans and German. Prior to the Bondelswarts rising he had worked in the O'kiep copper mines in the northern part of the Cape Colony.

During the Bondelswarts rising Morenga returned to South West Africa.⁹ Although partly of Herero extraction he was immediately given a position of prominence, not least because of his knowledge and leadership qualities. Leutwein regarded him as the headman of the Bondelswarts inhabiting the Karas Berge. As the Governor also noted, he combined, in terms of military prowess, the virtues of the Herero and of the Nama. District officer Schmidt in Keetmanshoop described Morenga as one of the principal leaders of the Bondelswarts during their revolt.¹⁰

In the Peace of Kalkfontein, which put an end to the Bondelswarts uprising, Morenga was outlawed by the Germans.¹¹ He succeeded, however, in eluding his pursuers, finding refuge in the Karas Berge, a region extremely difficult of access. Imbued with hatred, the Germans put a price of 1,000 Marks on his head on 3 June 1904. As well as offering this reward, von Burgsdorff managed to find "an enterprising Boer who, it is reasonably safe to assume, will do away with Jakob Marinka [another spelling of Morenga's name—H. D.]"¹² The murder did not take place, however, because Morenga had meanwhile crossed into British territory. He was, at any rate, sighted in June on the farm of a certain Spangenberg in Pissepoort, near the German border, but on British territory.

Early in July, Morenga returned to South West Africa, setting up a fortified

camp on the Sjambok Mountain. From there he went on forays into the neighbourhood, systematically disarming the farmers living in the area. In that way he supplied himself with weapons, ammunition and food, i.e. all he needed to resume the war against the Germans in the south.

The Germans were deeply worried about the turn events had taken in the south. They sent out a 30-strong detachment under Lieutenant von Stempel to capture Jakob Morenga. An encounter took place near Kouchanas on 30 August 1904, in which Lieutenant von Stempel and two other German soldiers were killed. The rest of the German detachment took flight. This engagement, ending in victory for Morenga, marked the beginning of war in the south.

As can be seen from the official records, the German defeat at Kouchanas had an unfortunate sequel. In their search for a scapegoat the Germans charged the Boer, Freyer, whose farm was located near the scene of the encounter with "treason" and with having "aided and abetted the rebels". After "summary proceedings" two of his sons and a son-in-law were executed by firing squad. Since the farmer, unlike those executed, was so-called pure white, his case was transferred to the court at Keetmanshoop.¹³

After the defeat they had suffered at Kouchanas, the Germans substantially increased the troops assigned to the task of dealing with Morenga. The latter, withdrawing to the Great Karas Berg, proved himself a master of guerrilla warfare reducing the enemy more or less to impotence.¹⁴ The Germans sustained one defeat after another or, as they euphemistically called it, they "broke off the engagement in time."¹⁵ In early October Morenga attacked a German company near Wasserfall, taking away all their horses. A study commissioned for the Kaiser's General Staff notes that the company "was virtually immobilized by the loss of their horses" and had to return to Keetmanshoop.¹⁶

Having opened hostilities with a band of eleven men in July-August, Morenga soon attracted much support from all sides because of the successes he achieved. By September he presided over 150 rifles and a few months later over nearly 400. Morenga's followers included both Nama and Herero, which was in itself an extraordinary fact. There was, for that matter, much else about Morenga that was extraordinary. A newspaper published in Cape Colony was not wholly mistaken in speaking of Morenga as the "future leader".¹⁷ Morenga was indeed a "man of the future" who was looking ahead. He contrasted favourably with the traditional chiefs who, through their long-standing collaboration with their German colonial masters, had become accomplices in the subjugation of their peoples. Morenga, also, was not wont to think along tribal lines; he wanted to see Nama and Herero both fighting against German imperialism rather than against each other. Once he had made this principle his own, he consistently adhered to it. That he sought to exchange German colonial rule over South West Africa, which he abhorred, for British suzerainty¹⁸ was inevitable at the time because political independence for the Herero and Nama was an unrealistic proposition. There was an element of tragedy in the fact that he was later struck down by a British bullet.

When in the opening days of October 1904 the great Nama uprising broke out, the situation in Namaland changed overnight. The Germans were compelled to leave Morenga alone, at least temporarily, in order to confront their new opponent, Hendrik Witbooi. Despite the great difficulties which the outbreak of the Nama uprising entailed for the Germans, they were not exactly unhappy with this development as it afforded them a pretext to go ahead with their policy of making a clean sweep in Namaland as well. For example, Leutwein, who was greatly surprised by the uprising,¹⁹ declared: "For all the misery Witbooi's rebellion has inflicted on the Protectorate, there is also a good side to it in that it has created a clear situation which we must welcome, especially since it has been our intention to strike out along new paths to resolve the native issue."²⁰

Leutwein assumed that, unlike the Herero, the Nama had not been planning their uprising long in advance. One sign of this was that the Nama had not opened hostilities together with the Herero, but only after their defeat²¹ and another was that those Nama who had been fighting against the Herero on the German side were completely taken by surprise by the revolt. Yet such an appraisal was rather one-sided because it was exclusively based on the personality of Hendrik Witbooi who had been so impressed by the German superiority in weaponry during the 1893-94 war that he subsequently decided to cooperate with them. In fact, all the indications are that the younger subchiefs of the Nama (Samuel Isaak excepted) were taking an entirely different attitude towards German colonial rule than their aged kaptein and that the younger generation had long been determined to challenge German imperialism, held back only by Witbooi's authority.²² In this light, great importance must be attached to the events that occurred in the last few months leading up to the Nama insurrection, for it was these events that induced the kaptein to assume the leadership of the movement. It is necessary, therefore, to distinguish between the root causes of the uprising, some of them stretching far back in time, and the immediate cause that triggered it.

The Causes of the Uprising

The crucial point, just as in the case of the Herero, was the systematic expropriation of the Nama whose land and cattle were gradually passing into the hands of the German settlers. There were, however, several factors which tended to cushion the effects of that process in the case of the Nama. For one thing, the Nama were much smaller in number than the Herero (20,000 as against 80,000) so that they were less restricted in space by the territorial losses they had suffered. Nor had the construction of a railway line been envisaged in Namaland. For another thing, the cattle herds of the Nama were nowhere near as large as those of the Herero, and were therefore less of a magnet for itinerant German traders.²³

A major cause of the insurrection was the state of total rightlessness in which the Nama were held by their German colonial masters. This emerges forcefully from a

letter addressed by Hendrik Witbooi to Governor Leutwein. Asked about the reasons for the rebellion, Witbooi said he had been prompted to rise in revolt against German rule by the countless murders and other outrages committed by the Germans in peace time.²⁴

Basically, the root causes of the Nama uprising were the same as those of the Herero revolt. If the Nama in the end took up arms, this was because they were unable to endure the German colonial yoke any longer. Even Leutwein's deputy Tecklenburg acknowledged this, for he wrote in a report to the Colonial Department: "The one and only reason for the rebellion is the desire to end German rule."²⁵

The most important single factor in triggering the uprising was the threats of extremists to "make it hot" for the Nama after the crushing of the Herero uprising. The threats ranged from the disarming of the Nama to the elimination of their kapteins and the dissolution of their tribal system. Hendrik Witbooi took the threat to disarm the Nama very seriously, and in a message to Kaptein Manasse from Hoachanas, in which he informed him of the outbreak of the revolt, he pointed out: "If the Government demand that I and my people turn in our weapons, we will not comply."²⁶

Hendrik Witbooi was especially incensed by the involvement of the missionaries in the agitation against his people. The missionary Wandres, for example, one of the most fanatical zealots in South West Africa, was thundering from his pulpit in Windhoek against Isaak Witbooi, the kaptein's son and successor, who he said would bring down upon his head the wrath of God, acting through the agency of the German Government, as had previously happened to Kaptein Abraham Christian who had been shot dead in Warmbad.²⁷ And the construction engineer Holzapfel, who worked for the mission in Rietmond, Hendrik Witbooi's place of residence, said that the Witboois would be disarmed by the German Government as punishment for their "sins".

One factor determining Hendrik Witbooi to abandon his wait-and-see attitude, was the reports he received from nineteen Nama who returned to Gibeon about mid-September 1904. They formed part of a 100-strong Nama contingent fighting against the Herero on the German side. After the battle in the Waterberg the nineteen had secretly left their unit and managed to reach Gibeon, unnoticed by German soldiers.²⁸ They told their kaptein about the ruthlessness of the Germans who they said were bent on wiping out all Africans no matter what their tribe or sex. The deserters left no doubt that, in their opinion, the Germans would not be able to get the upper hand over the Herero. In particular, they complained about the bad treatment they had received at the hands of their "alles". This was even admitted by Leutwein who wrote in a communication to the Colonial Department: "It is not that these people [the Nama-H. D.] have been deliberately treated badly by the armed forces, and certainly not by the High Command. But there have been frequent instances of this being done by new officers and men out of ignorance. They are incapable of distinguishing between the native

labourers we have hired and our voluntary allies who have risked their lives for a cause other than their own."²⁹ And last, but not least, the group of deserters confirmed that they, too, had been told in a comminatory tone that, once the Herero had been "dealt with", it would be the turn of the Nama.

Finally, there was an influential episode in the period leading up to the Nama uprising: the appearance of a representative of the so-called Ethiopian Movement. Since a fairly recent study is available about this matter,³⁰ it will receive only cursory treatment here.

The Ethiopian Movement³¹ was a movement of African Christians directed against those foreign missionaries who had discredited themselves by paving the way for colonial expansion and continuing to support that policy. At one stage, the Ethiopian Movement received much impetus from Afro-American Churches.³² Its aim was to establish an independent African Church. From such a goal it was but a small step to the political demand "Africa to the Africans". The foreign missionaries, acting hand in glove with the colonial authorities, bitterly attacked the Ethiopian Movement, branding it as a sect and its representatives as heretics. The Movement, which played a major role in South Africa about 1900, spread to the Nama whereas the Herero and Ovambo remained unaffected by it.

A couple of months before the outbreak of the Nama uprising, a follower of the Ethiopian Movement, the "prophet" Sheppert Stürmann from Cape Colony, visited Namaland to proclaim that the time of redemption had come for the Nama people.³³ Most bourgeois sources claim that it was under the influence of this "prophet" that Hendrik Witbooi made up his mind to stage an uprising. Indeed, Leutwein opined: "There can be no doubt that the main cause of the rebellion was a religious mania provoked by a prophet from the Cape Colony who professes allegiance to the Ethiopian Church."³⁴

The appearance of the "prophet" did unquestionably strengthen Hendrik Witbooi's resolve to throw down the gauntlet to German imperialism. Moreover, Witbooi appears to have made use of the "prophet" to reassert his authority as both political and religious leader of his tribe in an effort to bring back into his fold that part of his people who as Christians were under the influence of the Mission. But to maintain that the appearance of the "prophet" and his impact on Witbooi or, more generally, the Ethiopian Movement was directly responsible for the Nama uprising is to fly in the face of the facts.

The First Stages of the War

After Hendrik Witbooi had reached his decision to lead his people into battle, he urged the other kapteins in Namaland to join in the rebellion. The Franzmann community under Simon Kopper, the so-called Red Nation under Manesse Noreseb and the Veldschoendragers under Hans Hendrik all threw in their lot with the insurgents. But Christian Goliath, kaptein of the Berseba tribe, and Paul Frederiks,

kaptein of the Bethanie people, as well as the Keetmanshoop tribe refused to take part, under the influence of the Mission. The Germans spoke of "tribes partly involved in the rebellion, i.e. tribes whose kapteins plus a smaller or larger number of people were keeping out of the conflict"³⁵ As far as these tribes are concerned, a major portion of the Bethanie people under Cornelius, in open defiance of their kaptein, participated in the uprising of the Nama.³⁶ The Rehobothers (the so called Bastards) preferred to stay on the German side, Witbooi's appeal notwithstanding. The Zwartboois and Topnaars,³⁷ who lived in the district of Outjo outside Namaland, and the Bondelswarts in Warmbad, whose leader was Johannes Christian, were taken prisoner by the Germans in a *coup de main* before they were able to join in the uprising.

At the outset of the insurrection, the Witboois, the most populous of the Nama tribes, included between 800 and 900 warriors, about one-third of them armed with rifles. The Franzmann community under Simon Kopper provided another 120 men, the Veldschoendragers, 150 to 200, and the so-called Red Nation, approximately 190.

The Nama uprising began in the opening days of October 1904, about 40 settlers being killed. The majority of Germans took refuge in fortified places which, with the exception of Nomtsas, withstood the onslaught of the insurgents. That the aim of the rebellion was to expel the Germans rather than kill them emerges very clearly from a message which Samuel Isaak, subchief of the Witboois, addressed to Sergeant Beck, deputy commandant of Gibcon, shortly after the outbreak of the uprising. It read: "Sergeant, I leave it to your discretion to transport all women and children to Lüderitz Bay in ox wagons so that they may return to Germany. Men without weapons bearing the Witbooi mark are also free to join them. They will not be molested."³⁸

The conduct of the war by the Nama was grossly distorted by many authors of the time, and this remains true of bourgeois publications in our own day. A book brought out in West Germany some years ago says that, after the outbreak of the Nama uprising, all whites in the area were butchered: "Even the missionaries and women and children were not spared by the Hottentots."³⁹ This is a long way from the truth.

The shooting of the "missionary" Holzapfel is cited very frequently to illustrate the "murder of missionaries". Holzapfel, who was not a missionary but a construction engineer working for the mission, had attracted attention before the beginning of the uprising by his hateful agitation against the Witboois. On 3 October 1904 Hendrik Witbooi wrote the following letter to him: "You know very well what times these are. I have decided at last to break with the German Government. The Lord has resolved to save the Hottentots. I call on you, therefore, to surrender all your cartridges and powder." Holzapfel refused to do so, instead burning the powder and hiding the cartridges, for which he was shot.⁴⁰

The atrocity tales about butchered German women and children were designed to generate hatred towards the Nama. But even the German General Staff had

to concede in its study that, as a rule, women and children were spared.⁴¹ Quite apart from the fact that they came to no harm, there were numerous cases of women and children being brought into the immediate vicinity of fortified places by Nama tribesmen, risking their own lives in the process. As an example, a large group of women and children from Rietmond and the surrounding area arrived in Gibeon on 8 October 1904, having been escorted to a nearby site by Hendrik Witbooi's men.⁴² This act of humanity was grossly misrepresented in an acid comment from the missionary, Spellmeyer, who said in a report to the Rhenish Missionary Society: "These brutes had abandoned them in the open field on the far side of Guwuru, a three hour's ride from Gibeon. Without being able to satisfy their hunger and thirst they had to walk on, carrying the children in their arms. They arrived here completely worn out. Once again the Lord has intervened miraculously to help and save them."⁴³

When General Lothar von Trotha was advised of the outbreak of the Nama uprising he immediately gave orders to disarm the Witbooi contingent serving with him, which in any case was now down to about 80 men.⁴⁴ The trials and tribulations of these Witboois, who had fought with the Germans until they were disarmed, is evidence that collaboration with the enemy brings little reward.

As can be seen from a telegram addressed by the Deputy Governor, Hans Tecklenburg, to the German Foreign Office in Berlin's Wilhelmstrasse, Leutwein had suggested deporting the Witboois to the Cameroons to prevent any attempt to escape. Tecklenburg commented: "Togo may be an even more suitable place. Under present circumstances their deportation is an urgent necessity. In fact, the natives would show more understanding for our killing off the 80 Witboois than for feeding them at the public expense."⁴⁵ The Colonial Department agreed to deport the Witboois to Togo. In late November 119 Nama were shipped to Togo on board a Woermann steamship.⁴⁶

Six months later the district office in Lome, Togo, cabled to the Foreign Office in Berlin: "High death rate among Hottentots owing to intestinal disease, 54 having died so far. It is absolutely necessary that the remainder leave Togo at once."⁴⁷ While the Colonial Department agreed to have the surviving Nama sent back to South West Africa, von Trotha and Tecklenburg fiercely opposed such a measure. Tecklenburg even went so far as to declare: "The high death rate is hardly surprising, it must be seen as retribution for the rebellion. The Hottentots ought to be sent to Germany, but not back here by any manner of means."⁴⁸ When nothing happened, the Togo authorities became more insistent. A new cable said: "63 Hottentots dead, 11 healthy, the rest ill. Doctor demands they be removed from here."⁴⁹ But von Trotha remained adamant: "Transfer of Togo Witboois to an inland post [South West Africa-H. D.] is out of the question. I also refuse to take charge of them at either of the two seaports unless they are put in chains. Whoever orders their transfer will be held responsible for any killing of a German by any Witbooi sent here."⁵⁰ Faced with this massive threat, the Colonial Department caved in, ordering the Nama to be sent to the Cameroons instead.

Out of an original 119 Nama, 49 were still alive in mid-September 1905. Of these 48 reached the Cameroons, but 14 were in such a critical condition that they had to be given urgent medical attention by a government physician. As for the other 34 Nama, a report notes: "The latter are scarcely fit for work and present a miserable spectacle. . . . In order to avoid an unfavourable impression on the natives here, they are kept apart from the other labourers."⁵¹

The Governor of the Cameroons had accepted the Witbooi Nama in the hope of getting cheap labour that way. When these hopes were dashed because they were totally unfit for work,⁵² he also demanded that they be shipped back to South West Africa as "we get very little in return for all the expensive food."⁵³ After an exchange of telegrams which lasted several months, the newly appointed Governor of South West Africa, Lindequist, agreed at long last to allow the surviving Nama to return to the land of their birth. In June 1906, 42 set foot again on their native soil, about two-thirds having died as a result of their deportation.

As soon as he received word of the outbreak of the uprising, General von Trotha called for 4,000 reinforcements. At the same time, he demanded that a railway be built from Lüderitz Bay to Kubub to safeguard supplies in the south. This call went unheeded, however, because the authorities in Berlin were only too aware of the extraordinary technical difficulties posed by such a project and because they reckoned that the war in the south would not last very long and might be over before the railway would make itself felt.⁵⁴

Towards the end of 1904 the focus of the war in South West Africa gradually shifted to the south. In the first few months of military operations in Namaland, the German troops scored two limited successes. In a surprise raid on the Veldschoendragers near Koes they destroyed part of that tribe. Also, they managed to dislodge Hendrik Witbooi from his residence at Rietmond, the Witboois losing virtually all their possessions, notably their cattle.

As it turned out, Witbooi's expulsion from Rietmond was something of a Pyrrhic victory since the conflict in the south "degenerated into guerrilla warfare" as a German staff officer observed ruefully.⁵⁵ In the scenario that unfolded, a major European power, with about 15,000 soldiers in the field, was locked for years in a struggle with what were even initially only 1,000 to 2,000 and later no more than some hundred Nama whose methods of warfare proved unanswerable. The Nama and the Herero differed radically in their style of combat. While the Herero, hoping that their numerical strength would make up for their inferiority in weapons, met the Germans for a decisive battle in the Waterberg, the Nama, aware that they were badly outnumbered, had no intention of allowing the Germans to impose a showdown whose outcome would be inevitable. Hence they opted for guerrilla warfare from the outset, a technique of fighting in which they excelled. They would suddenly appear, picking off German patrols and raiding German supply convoys, and disappear as quickly as they had come. The German losses were rapidly increasing. Apart from Hendrik Witbooi, Morenga and Cornelius were past masters at guerilla warfare.

The engagements between the Nama and the Germans, of which there were more than two hundred,⁵⁶ will not be recounted here in detail. Yet it is appropriate to draw attention to the important fact that on several occasions Herero and Nama were fighting together against their German colonial masters. This did not only apply to Morenga's units: a sizeable Herero force intervened in the fighting at Auob in January 1905 on Hendrik Witbooi's side. Reportedly, this was a group of 250 men under the command of Samuel's son Friedrich Maharero.⁵⁷ Apparently, Friedrich Maharero dissociated himself from the Nama soon afterward because there is evidence that he lived in Bechuanaland on Lake Ngami from mid-1905.⁵⁸

Again, in March 1905, the German colonial authorities discovered the presence in Namaland of a relatively large Herero force under the command of Andreas, thus far an unknown quantity. This group first joined the Witboois and later, after Hendrik Witbooi's death, Cornelius. Andreas, who was severely wounded in action near Dochas in January 1906, is said to have died of thirst shortly afterwards.⁵⁹

After von Trotha's strategy against the Herero had, to all intents and purposes, proved a failure by the end of 1904, his conduct of the war against the Nama also began to come under criticism. When the German commander, in a telegram to the General Staff dated 30 December 1904, enumerated the immense difficulties he was facing in waging war in the south, he wound up by saying: "Under these circumstances I beg His Majesty to suspend operations in the south for the time being, although I consider this to be extremely dangerous politically." The general's apparent aim was to ensure the construction of a railway in the southern part of the territory. Oskar Stuebel, Director of the Colonial Department, seized upon this statement to tell the Imperial Chancellor: "It is difficult to interpret this as anything else but a declaration of bankruptcy on the part of General von Trotha. I have immediately contacted the General Staff and found out that Count von Schlieffen and his associates largely share my opinion about von Trotha's telegram. Nonetheless, the Count has chosen not to put this matter before His Majesty the Emperor for the moment."⁶⁰

In the spring of 1905, von Trotha went to the south in order to assume personal command of the operations against the Nama. From Gibeon he issued a proclamation on 22 April 1905, calling on them to surrender unconditionally. While the declaration was not as blood-curdling as that addressed to the Herero, it still threatened annihilation. It failed to have any effect on the Nama although it aroused violent opposition abroad. The German Ambassador to the Court of St. James reported that the *Globe* had interpreted von Trotha's proclamation as a sign of weakness. The paper warned the Cape Government "that continued support for the Germans might easily lead to a mass rising among the blacks of South Africa."⁶¹ In South West Africa itself, the proclamation had the unintended result that "owing to a misinterpretation"⁶² Johannes Christian, the Bondelswarts

kaptein held captive in Warmbad, was released together with his men and immediately joined in the Nama uprising.

Von Trotha, who wished to see a graceful exit arranged for him, badly needed a spectacular success against the Nama. Therefore, he decided to deliver his main blow against Hendrik Witbooi. Apparently unaware of von Trotha's motives, Colonel Berthold von Deimling considered Morenga the most dangerous opponent, an assessment dictated by military considerations. In open defiance of von Trotha's orders, he launched an assault on Morenga,⁶³ but without gaining a striking success. Even the General Staff noted in its study: "If Colonel Deimling had hopes of weakening Morenga for any length of time, he was disproved by the march of events in the following period."⁶⁴ After Deimling's return to Germany, Hendrik Witbooi was declared to be the principal enemy of the German troops in South West Africa.

By that time the conflict in South West Africa had been dragging on for 18 months without any end being in sight. Von Trotha blamed this fact partly on the continuing refusal to build a railway through Namaland. The number of his critics had kept growing in the meantime. When even the *Windbucker Nachrichten*, the news-sheet of the settlers, had the temerity to censure him, von Trotha reacted sharply. He ordered by cable "that henceforth the paper receive no more news, reports or articles from the authorities" because its "only response to the accommodating attitude shown by the military authorities has been to express unjust criticism."⁶⁵ The controversy between the paper and von Trotha brought to light some details of considerable interest. Officers returning to Germany were forbidden to inform the press about the political and military situation in South West Africa. In response to the charge of having expressed "unjust criticism" the paper said: "We can hardly be expected to fall on our knees and thank God for the state of bankruptcy in which the country finds itself because the slogan 'We have not come to fetch cattle for the settlers, but to crush the enemy' has been followed in the Waterberg in the war against the Herero." The *Vorwärts*, central organ of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, seized upon this controversy to castigate the German authorities for their conduct of the war and to hammer home the message that it was a fiasco.

How the colonial administration in Windhoek assessed von Trotha's strategy against the Nama emerges from a report which Tecklenburg sent to the Colonial Department. Labelled "strictly confidential", it reads in part: "Uncertainty prevails in every corner of the Protectorate. Once again a major attack is being planned at Headquarters in an attempt to encircle the main force of the Hottentots, purportedly massed between Gibeon and Bersaba on the lower Leverrivier. Should this operation be at least successful enough to declare, on the strength of the 'victory' achieved, that the military potential of the enemy has been destroyed, Headquarters could claim that its mission was fulfilled and that commanding officers lower down would have to cope with guerrilla warfare. This would clear the way for the new Governor. If, on the other hand, the operation turns out to

have been a wild goose chase or is not successful enough to warrant the dissolution of Headquarters, Berlin will have to intervene to enable the new Governor to take up his post and assume command. There are a number of questions on which the civilian administration should be allowed to express its views, which is not the case at present, for instance ways of protecting the farms to which settlers are returning, the treatment and use of the natives who have been taken prisoner or have surrendered of their own free will, measures against natives still roaming about, etc. The principal issue, however, is whether the method of encircling an enemy such as the Hottentots in a territory like this offers any prospect of success. . . . The insurgents are basing themselves in desert territory, somewhere in the marches or in mountainous areas within the Protectorate, peacefully consuming the cattle they have stolen, only to make new forays or to vanish into thin air when the encirclement has been almost completed and a concerted attack is due to begin. . . . On this matter too, which is predominantly of a military nature, but which deeply affects the country and its inhabitants, the new Governor could throw his weight into the balance."⁶⁶

That the situation in South West Africa had become very grave for German imperialism by mid-1905 was also the keynote of a private letter by Dr. Georg Hartmann whose position⁶⁷ made him somewhat of an authority on South West African affairs. Hartmann wrote in this letter: "That the situation has changed so abruptly [for the worse-H. D.] can also be gathered from the fact that, on the day after the latest Board meeting, Herr Woermann was firmly convinced that no fresh troops would be despatched, and that only a few days later it was decided all the same to put fresh contingents in the field. The situation in the south is even more precarious than at the outset of the rebellion. A short time ago we had a visit here by Privy Councillor von König, personnel officer in the Colonial Department of the Foreign Office, and his wife. He was in a despondent mood, saying that all hope had deserted him. It goes without saying that nothing of this must filter through."⁶⁸ And von Trotha himself said in a report to the General Staff: "There are no indications that the end of the insurrection is near at hand."⁶⁹

After Deimling's return to Germany, the Kaiser's troops in South West Africa switched their attention primarily to the Witboois who, in fact, had disappeared without trace after the fighting at Auob in early 1905. As it turned out later, their hiding-place had been the Kalahari. In July 1905 von Trotha received word that Hendrik Witbooi and his people had returned to their tribal area. To verify this report, the Germans sent an emissary carrying some unimportant message to Witbooi. This stratagem, previously used by Leutwein, was designed to help them determine the exact position and strength of the Witboois.⁷⁰ Either Hendrik Witbooi failed to see through the manoeuvre or he felt he could ignore it. The letter he received contained a demand for submission, which he rejected in the following words: "Peace will spell death for me and my nation, for I know that there is no place for me in your midst. As regards your offers of peace, what else are you doing than lecture me as you would a schoolchild. You know only too well that

I have rendered you many a service in times of peace, but in your peace I can see nothing but a desire to destroy us to the last man. After all, we have known each other for a lifetime."⁷¹

Although the spying mission had provided the Germans with the information they had been seeking, von Trotha's methods of warfare were ill-suited to transforming this information into military success. Rather, the Witboois managed time and again to elude their pursuers. The consequent stalemate would certainly have gone on like this for a long time yet, unless chance had come to von Trotha's aid. When the Witboois staged a raid on a German supply convoy near Fahlgras on 29 October, Hendrik Witbooi sustained a wound which soon proved fatal because no medical aid was available. It was more than two weeks later that von Trotha learned about Hendrik's death. To the man who brought him the tidings he said: "Nothing could have been more uplifting than this message."⁷² This reflects his relief at having got rid of his principal enemy whom he could not hope to vanquish by military means. With Hendrik Witbooi dead, von Trotha believed he had some justification at last to make his exit from South West Africa. So the man who was to go down in history as the butcher of the Herero disappeared quietly from the scene of his crimes on 19 November 1905.⁷³

The Witboois Withdraw from the Struggle

With the demise of Hendrik Witbooi, one of the most notable personalities among the Nama and Herero leaders in South West Africa was no more. His intellectual standing and sense of stewardship had made him the undisputed leader of the Nama people. He reversed his misguided policy of collaboration with the Germans by leading his people into battle and atoned for it through his death. He lives on in the memory of the Nama and, more than this, as a popular hero who laid down his life in the struggle against German imperialism.

Hendrik Witbooi's death had a demoralizing effect on the Witboois. He was succeeded by his son Isaak, who had neither the stature nor the prestige of his father. Before long the Witboois' subchief, Samuel Isaak, and the Veldschoendrager Kaptein, Hans Hendrik, parted company with the new leader. Under the influence of the Mission, they were intent on making peace with the Germans. There followed negotiations with the Germans "in the parlour of the Berseba mission" at the end of November, partly arranged by Christian Goliath, the kaptein of Berseba, a man entirely devoted to the Mission and who had held aloof from the Nama uprising. But, in the German camp, the offer of submission made by this part of the Witboois elicited a mixed response.

With von Trotha's departure, the civilian and military sectors had been separated from each other once again. Whereas Governor Friedrich von Lindequist was responsible for civilian matters, military authority rested with Colonel Dame. In a rather peculiar inversion of the familiar pattern it was the Governor who

was now pleading for a tough line, demanding the unconditional surrender of the Nama,⁷⁴ while the military who had vainly tried for the last year or so to defeat the Nama by armed might were inclined to grant somewhat less harsh terms. This was designed to encourage other Nama tribes to give up the fight as well.

During the negotiations they conducted, the German military, unlike the Governor, assured the Witboois of their personal liberty, in other words, they promised them that they would not become prisoners of war, but be allowed to live in Gibeon as free men and women. Apparently, however, the military had made the Governor believe that the negotiations would take place on the basis of his demand for the unconditional submission of the Nama. Be that as it may, Lindequist reported without further comment on 26 November 1905 that the Witboois under Samuel Isaak had surrendered, the group consisting of 74 men, 44 women and 21 children. A couple of days later he even added: "I have been able, though only at the very last moment, to annul the concessions made by a General Staff officer, who has promised them liberty and other things contrary to the instructions I have received from His Majesty."⁷⁵ Then, on 5 December, he did a complete about-face: "Owing to a misunderstanding which has not yet been fully cleared up, Samuel Isaak and his following have submitted on the terms offered by the military rather than on my own terms. This means he has been given assurances that he would remain a free man. It is too late now for me to change this without compromising the military and, thus, the Government as well."⁷⁶

Colonel Dame, in a telegram to the General Staff, explained what he had had in mind in promising liberty for the Witboois under Samuel Isaak: "Liberty is not synonymous with freedom of movement. Enforced settlement at specified locations, permanent military supervision and the obligation to perform labour in return for food rather than wages will make this a highly restricted form of liberty. The only difference between their treatment and that of prisoners of war is in the field of accommodation, the purpose being to encourage others to follow suit."⁷⁷

So it was not humanitarian considerations that prompted the military to offer the Nama somewhat more liberal terms, but the awareness that there was no other way for them to terminate a war they were incapable of winning by military means. It should be noted that the Germans failed to keep their part of the bargain. In contravention of the treaty concluded, the Witboois were first taken to Windhoek and later to Shark Island.

With his ill-considered decision to surrender to the German troops without any military necessity, Samuel Isaak exerted a demoralizing effect on the rest of the Witboois who were soon to follow his example. The Nama never forgave him his faint-hearted and capitulationist attitude after Hendrik Witbooi's death. As late as 1946, when the Nama dissociated themselves in large numbers from the Rhenish Missionary Society in South West Africa, they reminded the Isaaks who refused to make common cause with them that Samuel Isaak had behaved in a similarly disgraceful manner in 1905.⁷⁸

The Germans subsequently made use of Samuel Isaak to entice the remaining Witboois into giving up as well. But Governor Lindequist and Colonel Dame continued to quarrel about the terms of surrender. As far as Lindequist was concerned, he addressed the following telegram to the Wilhelmstrasse: "I do not want them [the Witboois-H. D.] to be given any assurances that they will remain at liberty, rather they should be treated as prisoners of war for a certain period of time. If leniency is shown towards these unrepentant sinners now, this may have disastrous consequences for the entire native issue at some later stage. They should, in fact, be resettled in Windhoek or further north . . . I am, for that matter, convinced that Samuel Isaak, too, would have accepted the harsher terms - without a promise of personal liberty - which I had proposed if he had been left with no alternative. Rash action and excessive leniency are out of place here, especially with regard to the Hottentots."²⁹

A few days later, the pattern set by Samuel Isaak repeated itself. Lindequist informed Berlin that the Witbooi headman Sebulon and his following (105 men, 102 women and 70 children in all) had given themselves up in Gibeon on the terms offered by the Governor. But it was not long before Lindequist discovered that he had once again been deceived by the military.

The process of bringing the Witboois to heel was brought to an end on 3 February 1906 when the new kaptein, Isaak Witbooi, surrendered with the remainder of his tribe. The prime mover was Samuel Isaak, now openly acting on behalf of the German side. With the Witboois withdrawn from the common front of the Nama, the German imperialists had gained their first major success against the Nama, a success less attributable to their military prowess than to Samuel Isaak's capitulationism and the demoralization of the Witboois resulting from the death of their leader, Hendrik. While the ranks of their adversaries had thinned considerably, the German imperialists were still facing Nama formations led by Simon Kopper, Cornelius, Morenga, Morris, and Johannes Christian.

The next target of the German troops was Cornelius, who had emerged as a past master of guerrilla tactics. The opposing sides were, however, unevenly matched, with Cornelius having no more than 250 to 300 able-bodied men under his command. The Germans, vastly superior in numbers and equipment, were able to take turns at pursuing their enemy. Through abrupt changes of direction Cornelius succeeded time and again in shaking off his pursuers. After a chase lasting several months, the majority of the Nama who had been fighting under his command were so exhausted that they had no choice but to surrender. So on 17 February 1906 160 men and 140 women and children began their march into captivity. As for their leader, he contrived once again to slip through the Germans' hands, but on 3 March he, too, was forced to surrender together with 86 men and 36 women and children.³⁰ This was a severe blow to the Nama.

About Cornelius's crucial role there could be no doubt whatsoever. Even the German military recognized in the study of the General Staff that he was "the smartest of all Nama leaders", who was "constantly threatening both access roads

to the southern theatre of war" and eluding his German attackers with "virtually unparalleled celerity and skill."⁸¹

The German imperialists heaved a sigh of relief on learning that this important adversary had had to give up the unequal struggle. In fact, the Kaiser even sent a telegram to the troops involved, congratulating them on their success.

Fielding, one of Cornelius's lieutenants, continued the battle against the German forces for more than a year at the head of what remained of the Bethanie people. He capitulated on 5 April 1907.

After Cornelius had been put out of action, the Germans focussed their attention on Morenga, who had been successfully waging war against them since mid-1904. Morenga, unquestionably the ablest leader of the South West Africans, stood head and shoulders above the Germans in the art of guerrilla warfare, and even the Kaiser's top brass had to acknowledge his tactical skill. Captain Bayer, who served on the General Staff, noted that Morenga, "through his mastery of evasive tactics, through his cleverly arranged raids and especially through the impact of his towering personality, made the war last longer and longer, thereby inflicting incalculable damage on us."⁸² He summed up his appraisal of Morenga as follows: "He tended to think in strategic terms, which set him apart from all other native kapteins. Taken all in all, he was an astute soldier, an enemy who deserves our respect."⁸³

The engagements between Morenga's forces and German troops would be well worth discussing in detail, but this is impossible within the framework of this study. The fighting reached its climax in 1905 when Morenga ambushed the colonial troops near Hartebeestmund, inflicting heavy casualties on them and forcing them to retreat.

Even Morenga's opponents frequently pointed out that he was very humane, something which can hardly be said of the Germans. Although they had given up the intransigent "no prisoners" policy practised during the campaign against the Herero, especially when surrender was offered voluntarily, there were still cases of captives of either sex being killed when they were considered a mere burden. Citizens of the Cape Colony who had been working for a time as drovers for the Germans in South West Africa reported after their return home that they had been eye-witnesses to horrifying acts of cruelty.⁸⁴ Let us mention here just one of the many examples on record, the information having in fact been provided by a German. He reported: "Not far from Hartebeestmund our troops captured 50 women and 38 children, but failed to extract from them any information about Morenga's whereabouts. I am not sure whether it was for this reason alone or partly because of the difficulties involved in transporting the prisoners that they were all shot. Maybe both considerations were playing a part. At any rate I feel ashamed of being a German."⁸⁵

The Germans Pursue Morenga into British Territory

Between December 1905 and February 1906, operations against Morenga had to be suspended because of supply problems.⁸⁶ The Nama took advantage of this state of affairs to mount a number of successful attacks. In March 1906 German forces launched a large-scale offensive which Morenga evaded by crossing into British-ruled territory on 1 May. He and his men pitched camp near Van Rooisvlei, about 10 kilometres from the border,⁸⁷ where they appeared to be safe from attack. Yet the German troops, who were commanded by Captain Bech, crossed the border on 4 May and slaughtered the Nama who were completely taken by surprise. Twenty-three Nama were killed, but Morenga, albeit wounded, managed to escape once again.

In their study, the General Staff put their own construction on this border violation by German troops, claiming that it was only after the killing of the Nama that a member of the Cape police force pointed out to Captain Bech that he was on British territory.⁸⁸ That the border was violated deliberately emerges clearly, however, from the files of the Imperial Colonial Office. With calculated naiveté, the Military Command added in a telegram to Governor Lindequist: "We do not consider this a case of infringement of British neutrality because the Cape police, even if they had wanted to do so, would have been incapable of forcing them to lay down their arms."⁸⁹

Attempting to brazen it out, Governor Lindequist called on the German Consul-General in Cape Town "to protest vehemently to the Cape Government over these persistent and flagrant violations of international law . . . Please assure the Cape Government that if such request is made our military force is prepared to assist the Cape police in maintaining neutrality, but let it be known as well that if the Cape police are unwilling to honour the obligations of neutrality, as appears to be the case along the eastern border, our force cannot be blamed for resorting to self-help."⁹⁰

The Foreign Office in Berlin was deeply worried about the potential implications of the border violation and the undiplomatic statement which Governor Lindequist had asked the German Consul-General to deliver to the Cape Government. The German Foreign Office, therefore, instructed the German Ambassador to the Court of St. James that, if the matter was raised by the British Government, he should leave them in no doubt "that the border violation is deeply deplored here and that we shall do our utmost to prevent such an incident repeating itself." At the same time the Consul-General in Cape Town was given orders to refrain from making representations to the Cape Government—contrary to what Lindequist had requested him to do.⁹¹

The German Consul-General in Cape Town nonchalantly dismissed the misgivings expressed in Berlin. The cable he sent to the Foreign Office in reply illustrates the tacit collaboration between German and British imperialism in holding down the African population: "Your instructions came too late as the official

statement had been transmitted the day before. It was, in fact, unimpeachable, the Colonial Secretary here being well-informed. The engagement provoked by Bech's detachment took place five miles inside English territory notwithstanding a protest. About 20 Hottentots were killed. Morenga was wounded and is being pursued by the Cape police force. The Colonial Secretary will lodge a formal protest, but has full understanding for the line taken by Bech."⁹²

That the German troops paid little heed to instructions that they should respect the border can also be seen from the fact that shortly after the incident involving Bech's detachment another border encroachment occurred. Since Morenga had escaped once again, German officers recruited spies to locate him on British territory. When Lieutenant Beyer learned of his whereabouts, he decided to steal a march on the Cape police. In the dead of night he crossed the border with ten mounted soldiers "to take Morenga into custody". But apparently Morenga had been given a tip-off, for the German patrol arrived half an hour too late. This episode involved a further violation of the frontier.⁹³

Two days later, on 7 May, Morenga and seven of his followers gave themselves up to the British Cape police⁹⁴ who took them to Prieska, some 300 kilometres from the border. This prompted the General Staff to observe triumphantly: "Morenga's elimination from the ranks of Germany's enemies signified a major success for the German troops."⁹⁵ However, the euphoric mood in imperialist quarters was premature because within a year or so Morenga stood poised again to carry on the war in South West Africa.

The war had by now been going on for two and a half years still with no end in sight. A few hundred Nama were offering bitter resistance to 10,000 German soldiers, and preventing the German imperialists from resuming their exploitation of South West Africa. Deimling's memoirs make it clear to what extent the Kaiser was upset by the protracted nature of the conflict. In fact, Wilhelm II urged Deimling "to secure the speedy ending of the uprising which has cost us so much of blood and gold."⁹⁶

Negotiations, the Last Resort

When Deimling returned to South West Africa in July 1906 as the new commander of the "protective force", his paramount aim, therefore, was to terminate the war as soon as possible. For this purpose he ordered a complete change in the style of combat, which was to be adjusted to the guerrilla tactics of the Nama.⁹⁷ At the same time, he intimated that unlike the Governor he was keenly interested in negotiations.

The Germans' principal opponents in the second half of 1906 were the Bondelswarts under Johannes Christian who had since early August 1906 been constantly pursued by small German units carrying out this task in turn, a method of warfare that marked a complete break with the spectacular operations mounted before.

The modifications did not fail to bring results. In October the Germans and the Bondelswarts began negotiations on the ending of hostilities. The study of the General Staff notes on this score: "Since it was more than doubtful whether the talks would produce results, Colonel von Deimling omitted to inform the Governor, who was visiting Germany at the time, and the central authorities of the matter."⁹⁸ Deimling's intentions in taking this line were to bar the Governor, who was demanding prolonged captivity and deportation of the Bondelswarts, and the Colonial Department from influencing the negotiations.

The talks dragged on and on as it was difficult to overcome the deep-seated distrust displayed by the Bondelswarts and their leader, Johannes Christian. For a long time it was in doubt whether they would surrender at all. Later on, Deimling said on this point: "The experience of the campaign against the Hottentots underlines the need to exercise caution in assessing such an enemy. Before the weapons had been turned in on the stated terms, even the smallest incident might have led to the resumption of hostilities and destroyed the prospects of peace."⁹⁹

Running parallel, negotiations were conducted with Cornelius Stürmann, a headman of the Bondelswarts not to be confused with the "prophet" Stürmann.¹⁰⁰ The peace talks were concluded at Lifdood on 21 November 1906. Deimling again did not apprise the Governor—or the Colonial Department or the General Staff for that matter—of this initiative. It was not until early in May of the following year that he mentioned the conclusion of an agreement to Oskar Hintreger, the Governor's deputy.¹⁰¹

Berthold von Deimling's secret diplomacy was designed to negotiate an end to the war in South West Africa as soon as possible. To achieve this, he had to offer the Nama a number of concessions, which the Governor and the central authorities in Berlin were rather reluctant to grant. Hence his policy of presenting them with *faits accomplis*. It was, in fact, not liberal sentiments, let alone humanitarian considerations that prompted Deimling to proceed along these lines. Rather, the motivating factor was the Emperor's urgent desire to see Germany's longest and most expensive colonial war, which was undermining the prestige of the German Army, brought to a speedy conclusion.

The treaty with Cornelius Stürmann fell short of the Governor's demands on a number of essential points. There was no mention of captivity or deportation. Stürmann was even left in possession of his rifle "until a three-barrelled gun which Captain Siebert has promised him has been repaired in Keetmanshoop." Furthermore, the Bondelswarts were given 600 nanny-goats and a number of male animals as well as 20 Marks per man and 10 Marks per woman to buy clothing. They also received two ox-wagons previously used by the military so that they might earn a living through the transporting of goods.¹⁰² These provisions make it abundantly plain which side had been under more pressure to seek an agreement.

This was even more apparent when a treaty was concluded with the Bondelswarts under Johannes Christian. The negotiations lasted from early October to 23 December 1906. The day before the signing took place there was still a risk

of the talks foundering due to a German demand that the Bondelswarts should leave their tribal area. Estorff, who was leading the German negotiating team, urged that they be granted locations in their tribal area because otherwise the treaty was in jeopardy. Deimling "opted for what was immediately attainable in the interests of the colony and the mother country."¹⁰³ On 23 December the two sides signed a treaty in terms of which the 120 Bondelswarts under Johannes Christian ceased hostilities and handed in their 105 rifles.

It was only 14 days later that Deimling informed Hintrager of the text of the treaty which was transmitted to Berlin forthwith. In it, the Bondelswarts undertook to recognize German suzerainty and to turn in all their rifles and ammunition. They were assigned specified settlement areas on their tribal lands where they would live as free people. So that they might make a living, they were provided with 1,500 head of young cattle, mostly female animals. The kaptein (!) received 300 sheep and a team of oxen. The treaty was to be extended to include the Bondelswarts who had crossed into British territory during the Nama uprising, and the Cape Government was to be requested without delay to ensure their repatriation.¹⁰⁴

In a lengthy telegram to Lindequist, Colonel von Deimling explained his reasons for concluding the treaty, maintaining that its provisions were entirely consistent with the Governor's own views. In conclusion, he stated: "I trust that Your Excellency fully approves of the broad outlines of the agreement which I have negotiated, faced with the decision of whether to end the uprising at once, thereby maintaining a tribe limited in its essential rights and deprived of its weapons, but rather content with the new situation because it affords them a source of livelihood, or to continue guerilla warfare indefinitely, thereby making settlement in the south impossible for a long time yet."¹⁰⁵

The treaty with the Bondelswarts came as a surprise to the authorities in Berlin, Lindequist happening to be on a visit there at the time, and especially to the Colonial Department. The Governor promptly cabled back to Windhoek: "I do not agree to the Bondelswarts being placed in locations near Kalkfontein and Keetmanshoop. Please inform me by telegram how this provision can be revoked so that they might be deported to the north."¹⁰⁶ Deimling replied that he had left no stone unturned during the talks to enforce their deportation. But when the negotiations were on the point of foundering on this issue, he said, it had become necessary to abandon this demand. It was not now possible to move the Bondelswarts to the north because they had laid down their arms on condition that they would be allowed to stay.

There followed weeks of behind-the-scenes haggling in Berlin over whether the treaty should be accepted as a *fait accompli* or modified. The first to make his voice heard was Lindequist, who told Bernhard Dernburg, the new Director of the Colonial Department: "If I were asked today to say whether I would be prepared, by virtue of the terms of surrender negotiated with the Bondelswarts on 23 December of last year, to assume responsibility for law and order in the

Protectorate and thus for the future of the territory, I would have to answer in the negative. The policy which I have begun to practise towards the natives on the basis of detailed discussions with the late State Secretary Baron von Richt-hofen has now been thrown overboard. What has been infringed, above all, is the principle that the chieftaincy should be abolished, a development that may have political implications of the gravest nature."¹⁰⁷

While Lindequist left unanswered the question of what should happen with the treaty, Angelo Golinelli, the Colonial Department official responsible for South West Africa, was even more critical in his attitude. In a detailed expert opinion he dissected the treaty point by point, concluding that it would have to be subjected to a thorough revision.¹⁰⁸

In a report to the Imperial Chancellor, Dernburg set out the pros and cons and then observed: "While I do not fail to see the drawbacks of the agreement concluded, I cannot bring myself to advocate its nullification . . . In my humble opinion it would be advisable to put up with the situation created by Colonel von Deimling for the time being, but to contemplate measures susceptible of forestalling any undesirable consequences the agreement might have. I am confident that Governor von Lindequist has the necessary skill to accomplish this task."¹⁰⁹

Having been briefed on the matter by Chancellor von Bülow, Kaiser Wilhelm II decided that the treaty between Deimling and the Bondelswarts must stand. The affair ended on a tragi-comic note when the Kaiser made the naive remark: "What matters is that we have their weapons and rifles, that they are without arms and unable to gun down my brave officers and soldiers."¹¹⁰

Since the treaty with Johannes Christian was to be extended to the Bondelswarts who had crossed the Orange River during the Nama insurrection to seek refuge in the Cape Colony, negotiations were held to this effect at Ramansdrift and Springbokfontein late in January 1907. Conducting the negotiations on the German side were Captain Hagen and Father Malinowsky as well as an Englishman called Captain Fenn, who was described as the Steinkopf representative of the Imperial Consulate-General in Cape Town. A couple of British officers and civil servants were also present to look after their government's interests, which were largely identical with the German ones. Their chief interlocutors were Joseph Christian, a brother of Johannes Christian, and Abraham Morris. During the talks Germans and Britons made a concerted effort to prevail on the Nama to return to South Africa. After some hesitation, Joseph Christian agreed. According to Captain Fenn, who kept the German Consul-General in Cape Town, Humboldt, posted about the progress of the negotiations in private and confidential messages, it was no easy task to persuade him to do so. He said that Christian had put forward ever new demands which he had rejected and then added: "Breaking out into invective, he said the German Government would have to treat him well because he would never have surrendered to the German Government of his own accord, rather it had been the Germans who had taken the initiative."¹¹¹

Despite the support they received from the British, the Germans found it ex-

tremely difficult to come to terms with Abraham Morris. Fenn reported that Morris said that what Father Malinowsky had told him was all very well, but that he preferred to stay in the Cape Colony. A few days later Morris decided to make peace with the Germans and return to South West Africa, conditional on first holding a conversation with Morenga. Thereupon the German Consul-General Humboldt sent a cable to Berlin, asking for instructions on the best way of proceeding. The Colonial Department's reply was: "Prevent meeting with Morenga." This shows how afraid of him the Germans still were.

Given the fact that the Bondelswarts had fared rather poorly since they entered British-ruled territory—they had been interned there—the Anglo-German endeavours to lure them back to their native land began to bear fruit. One by one, the Bondelswarts agreed to go back to South West Africa. By May 1907 the number of Bondelswarts in the locations had risen to about 1,000.¹¹² According to the study of the General Staff this figure had climbed to 1,224 by early June.¹¹³

After the Bondelswarts had given up the battle against German imperialism, the only groups continuing the Nama's struggle were Simon Kopper's 100 to 150 Franzmanns and a few minuscule Nama units without military significance.

In February 1907 Deimling told the General Staff that he had no objections to lifting the state of war in South West Africa at the end of March.¹¹⁴ There were two reasons why the military was so impatient to have the war officially declared over, even before the end of the fighting with Simon Kopper's forces. For one thing, the long-drawn-out conflict was increasingly eroding the prestige of the German Army and, for another, the economy of the colony, virtually at a standstill since the outbreak of the Herero uprising, was crying out for an end to the fighting. So it happened that the state of war in South West Africa was lifted "by order of His Majesty" on 31 March 1907. This did not, however, signal the end of hostilities, Morenga and Simon Kopper continuing the struggle against German imperialism.

Morenga is Shot by the British

Jakob Morenga had surrendered to the British on 7 May 1906 after his unit had been surprised and slaughtered by a German detachment led by Captain Bech, in violation of international law and in defiance of protests from the Cape police. He was taken to Prieska, where a large crowd assembled to welcome the celebrated guerrilla leader who was dubbed the "black De Wet"¹¹⁵ in the Cape Colony. Morenga was interviewed by several journalists, including one on the staff of the *Cape Times*. The reporter asked him whether his capture spelled the end of the war in South West Africa. Morenga answered in the negative, saying that his son Petrus would assume command and continue the struggle. Asked whether the war would drag on for much longer, he replied: "Yes, indeed. It will last as long as there is a single African in the bush." His views about the British, however, were

marred by illusions. In fact, he wanted to see South West Africa pass into British hands. In response to the question as to how he felt as a British prisoner, he said that he expected to be treated fairly by the English.¹¹⁶

The "fair" treatment the British administered to Morenga, who had requested political asylum, was to hold him captive for more than a year. They did not, however, go so far as to extradite him to South West Africa on charges of alleged criminal offences as the German Government insisted they should do. Since Morenga could not be detained indefinitely, the German military leaders in South West Africa were waiting with mixed feelings for the day of his release which they were seeking to prevent at all costs. When the German Consul-General in Cape Town reported in late December 1906 that Morenga was due to be freed in a few days' time, Deimling, filled with consternation, cabled to Berlin: "As long as the Bondelswarts have not been brought together entirely in locations, I consider that his release may endanger the calm prevailing in the Protectorate."¹¹⁷ Following this, the German Foreign Office instructed its Ambassador in London to make representations to His Majesty's Government without delay. Reporting the outcome of his intervention, Ambassador Count Paul von Metternich noted with satisfaction: "I have discussed the content of Telegram 247 with Under-Secretary Sir E. Barrington. He fully shares our view that Morenga must not be released now. He said he would immediately contact the Colonial Office who had not yet received word of the matter by this afternoon and see that they ask Cape Town by cable for further information. The Under-Secretary believes that the news is based on some misunderstanding. He has promised to keep me abreast of developments."¹¹⁸ As a result of this *démarche*, Morenga's release was delayed by another six months.

Early in June 1907 the British had to set him free at last. Humboldt, the German Consul-General in Cape Town, told the Foreign Office in Berlin that at the very moment of Morenga's release he had made overtures to him, in the presence of the Colonial Secretary of the Cape Colony, pursuant to the instructions he had received from Deimling (meanwhile promoted to the rank of general) and the authorities in Windhoek. The gist of the "overtures" was that Morenga should subscribe to the agreement that had been signed with the Bondelswarts in December of the previous year. He turned down the German offer because he did not feel that he would be safe in South West Africa.

Having been set at liberty, Morenga went to Upington, where he was to remain under police surveillance. It appears that the tacit collaboration between the German and British imperialists had badly shaken his confidence in the British. So when the Upington authorities summoned him to report to the police he preferred to take refuge in an inhospitable border area, a fateful step enabling the British to move against him. Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, told the German Ambassador to the Court of St. James that Morenga would "never again be granted asylum on British territory and that all the arrangements had been made to arrest him should he attempt to return, or to force him back on to German

territory. Sir Edward said he deplored the fact he had eluded the vigilance of the Cape authorities."¹¹⁹

It is not quite clear why Morenga acted the way he did. Apparently he was seized with panic, fearing that he might be extradited after all. His subchief, Adam Witbooi, testified later that "Morenga had wanted to live in peace at Kuydas, but then made for the border out of fear."¹²⁰ Morenga was fully aware that there could be no question of resuming the struggle against the Germans at that time, especially as open collaboration between German and British imperialism against him was now inevitable.

Although the military situation was far from favourable for him, the very fact that he turned up at the South West African border rekindled the hopes of the Nama and Herero. Bruno von Schuckmann, the new Governor of South West Africa, reported later: "Morenga's appearance was like an electric shock, causing great excitement among the natives, all the way to the north. To restore calm it was necessary to stop sending soldiers home so as not to leave the north entirely unprotected."¹²¹ Morenga immediately attracted much support from all sides, notably from the Bondelswarts still in the Cape Colony. Morris was one of the first to join him.¹²²

The German colonial authorities viewed these developments with mounting concern. As a first step, they ordered that no more troops be shipped back to Germany. Then there followed a build-up of forces in Namaland, with twelve companies, three field batteries, four platoons of mountain artillery and four machine-guns being deployed there. On top of that, two recoil-operated 7.5-centimetre mountain guns were sent on their way from Hamburg. In view of the rugged terrain, the commander of the "protective force" was not planning to try to encircle Morenga's forces. He considered it highly unlikely that he would have a chance of taking Morenga by surprise and capturing him. His only hope lay in a concerted Anglo-German effort to track him down. So Schuckmann duly told the Cape Government that it was "the duty of a good neighbour to remove Morenga at once from the border, either dead or alive."¹²³

The Kaiser intervened in the debate at an early stage by instructing Lindequist to "put a price of 20,000 Marks on Morenga's head and to wipe out the whole bunch without mercy."¹²⁴ This order gave the Reich Colonial Office a tough task to carry out because the chances of "wiping out" Morenga's men on German-ruled territory were extremely slim. So as not to destroy the more promising prospect of neutralizing Morenga through negotiations, the Colonial Office made an attempt to interpret the Kaiser's order according to their own lights. In a memorandum which the Imperial Chancellor was to put before Wilhelm II, it was pointed out, *inter alia*: "I infer from Your Majesty's words that, while no mercy should be shown if fighting were to break out, negotiations on a suitable basis should not be barred either, as long as no armed clashes have taken place. But hesitating to communicate my views on the matter to the agencies under my authority without Your Majesty's permission, I beg Your Majesty to indicate by a marginal note that, while the

said Order rules out mercy in the event of hostilities breaking out, it does not make it impossible for the authorities responsible to enter into negotiations."¹²⁵

This attempt was thwarted by Division M of the Colonial Office.¹²⁶ In a strongly worded statement, Herr Maercker declared on behalf of Division M: "His Majesty's Order has not been to neutralize Morenga, but to wipe out the whole bunch without mercy.

"There can no doubt whatsoever that His Majesty wants to see Morenga rendered harmless *once and for all*. This can be achieved only by: (i) Morenga giving himself up, whereupon he will be executed as a murderer and brigand and his gang deported; or (ii) Morenga being deported together with his gang; or (iii) hostilities being opened against him. Father Malinowsky has acknowledged that unless we grant Morenga far-reaching concessions negotiations will be pointless. So we are left with no alternative but to go to war, the only approach I regard as being compatible with the honour of the German soldier and the interests of the Protectorate. Negotiations with Morenga which are not based on total submission must of necessity strike the still unruly Bondelswarts as a sign of weakness . . .

"I have serious objections to the Imperial Order being mitigated without those responsible making such a request because this will only detract from their initiative and their readiness to take decisions and assume responsibility. Therefore, I withhold my signature to the draft memorandum intended for the Imperial Chancellor."¹²⁷

At the request of Friedrich von Lindequist, now an Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office, Captain Hagen, a General Staff officer, had meanwhile been despatched to assist the British police officer in command of the Cape border region. On 17 September Lieutenant Curris met with Morenga about 10 kilometres west of Longklippe. He was told that Morenga would under no circumstances "surrender to the Germans, but only, if need be, to the British Major Elliott."¹²⁸ Elliott, accompanied by Hagen, then set off in pursuit of Morenga, finally spotting him on 20 September 1907 near Eenzamheid, about 100 kilometres north of Upington. There ensued an exchange of fire lasting four hours in which Morenga, one of his brothers and two of his nephews were killed. What the Germans would never have accomplished on their own had thus been achieved through Anglo-German cooperation. Lenin, when extracting passages from Egelhaaf's *Geschichte der Neuesten Zeit* (History of the Modern Age), observed critically concerning Anglo-German collaboration in suppressing the Nama uprising: "So the English were making common cause with the Germans in a colonial war!"¹²⁹

If the British hoped that their services would earn them the gratitude of the Germans, they were sadly mistaken. The first response, however, was a positive one. Schuckmann telegraphed to the Reich Colonial Office: "On behalf of the Imperial Government I have warmly thanked the Governor of the Cape for his energetic action against Morenga and asked him to communicate this to the Ministry and to the commander of the police force."¹³⁰ Within a few days of this, however, the Wilhelmstrasse informed the Reich Colonial Office of the Chancel-

lor's opinion "that while the press should commend the British and Cape Governments on their loyal conduct, they should not be too effusive in their praise."¹³¹ Then there followed a complete about-face when Lindequist declared: "Reiterating the viewpoint I have already expressed orally, I wish to inform you that the authorities here do not deem it necessary for further honours to be conferred on British officers involved in the engagement with Morenga."¹³²

The shooting of Morenga by the Cape police took a weight off the minds of the German rulers of South West Africa. Summing up the whole matter, Governor Schuckmann said: "Morenga's death has unquestionably removed the open threat hanging over us, and it will go a long way towards calming down the Hottentots, notably the Bondelswarts, because he was invested with a certain charisma in their eyes and many dissatisfied with their lot had linked their hopes for a better future with his person."¹³³

After Morenga's demise the German troops were still facing 100 to 150 men led by Simon Kopper, kaptein of the Franzmann people. At the beginning of 1907 they had located him northwest of Kowisekolk in the Kalahari Desert. German attempts to induce him to stop fighting and to add his name to the agreement with the Bondelswarts came to nothing because, as Deimling reported, he was still "suspicious and undecided". For this reason, the German Commander-in-Chief submitted the following plan to the General Staff about how to deal with Simon Kopper: "If he fails to make up his mind about laying down his arms shortly, I will put pressure on him by mounting a surprise attack, which can, however, be of only short duration given the current dearth of water in the Kalahari."¹³⁴ A couple of months later, Estorff had to concede that German "action against Simon Kopper has been unsuccessful on two occasions owing to inadequate supplies of water in the Kalahari."¹³⁵

With Simon Kopper again staging raids on German patrols in late 1907 and early 1908, the Governor of South West Africa charged Captain von Erckert with making systematic preparations for military action against Kopper. In March 1908, Erckert set out on his campaign against the Franzmanns, his forces comprising 430 men, four machine-guns and 700 camels. At that time Simon Kopper was encamped at Seatsub, approximately 90 kilometres inside British-ruled territory, where he fancied himself safe from the Germans.¹³⁶ The Kaiser's soldiers, however, once again flouting international law, crossed the border to penetrate 90 kilometres (!) deep into foreign territory until they spotted Simon Kopper's men on 16 March 1908. Pouncing on the completely surprised Nama, they killed 46 of them, but could not prevent Simon Kopper and the rest of his men from escaping. The casualties on the German side included 14 dead, among them Captain von Erckert.

Official German accounts¹³⁷ and other bourgeois sources¹³⁸ depict the raid near Seatsub as having taken place on German territory. In a work published in West Germany a number of years ago, Oskar Hintrager still insists that the attack occurred at Geinab (in South West Africa) and that after the engagement Simon

Kopper escaped "across the border".¹³⁹ Yet as emerges from the files now available, Hintrager, then Deputy Governor of South West Africa, was well informed about the incident and consequently falsified the facts deliberately.

That the raid on Simon Kopper took place well inside British territory can also clearly be seen from the report of Captain Willeke in which he said: "After he [Simon Kopper-H. D.] had seen our troops following him into English territory, the engagement having occurred about 90 kilometres from the presumed border, he is likely to seek to avoid any contact with our troops."¹⁴⁰

Even more intriguing than the border encroachment as such was the reaction of the British Government, which marked a climax in the collaboration between German and British imperialism in southern Africa. Frank C. Lascelles, the British Ambassador in Berlin, handed the German Government a note relating to the border violation on 15 May 1908. It said that "the German patrol who engaged Simon Kopper on 16 March of this year had clearly intruded into British territory. Normally, H. M. Government would feel obliged to ask the Imperial Government for an explanation regarding the conduct of the German troops, but in the light of the special circumstances prevailing, H. M. Government are prepared to accept the apologies which the Governor of German South West Africa has already offered to the High Commissioner for South Africa as being fully adequate and to regard the matter as closed."¹⁴¹

It was an almost unique instance of a sovereign state dismissing a severe border violation by the troops of another state so lightly. To cap it all, the *British* Ambassador had been instructed by his Government to submit proposals to the German Government as to how Simon Kopper might be rendered harmless. According to these proposals, the Cape authorities were to treat with Simon Kopper on behalf of the German Government. Under the arrangement envisaged, Simon Kopper would undertake to keep his distance from the South West African border in return for a pledge that he could live undisturbed on British territory and receive an annual allowance in money or in kind to be granted by the Germans.¹⁴²

A Shabby Deal

When Bernhard Dernburg, the new State Secretary of the Reich Colonial Office,¹⁴³ was visiting Cape Town soon afterward, the High Commissioner for South Africa, Lord Selborne, explained the British, i.e. his own, proposals for dealing with Simon Kopper in great detail during several conversations. Selborne stressed "that it was in the interests of both colonies if the present state of affairs, which was unsatisfactory for Cape Colony as well, could be overcome by a form of treatment of the rebellious natives better adjusted to the British method."¹⁴⁴ In a report, Dernburg quoted Selborne as having said during another meeting: "Since Sir Edward Grey served as Governor of Cape Colony we have employed a new method of dealing with unruly natives, which has proved very successful. I can only recom-

mend you to adopt it as well. Our approach is to grant such chiefs an insignificant yearly allowance in cattle or money for keeping their people under control, and this is all the more necessary in Kopper's case because the lack of any other means of subsistence forces him to continue leading the life of a brigand. Since he wants to live at peace with us, it is self-evident that he will carry out his forays in German South West Africa. For the Germans to be sure, one aspect makes the matter particularly difficult. Simon Kopper did, in fact, tell one of my officers at the end of last year that he would not treat with the Germans because he has no faith in them." Dernburg then added: "His Lordship said he did not know what had given rise to this antipathy and whether it was justified at all, but it was an incontrovertible fact. He suggested that his officers proffer such an allowance in his name if Kopper agreed to make his home in the eastern part of the country. He said he would have him moved so far eastward that it would henceforth be impossible for Kopper to get close to German territory without such a development coming to his notice. As for the rather insignificant costs involved, these would fall to our share."¹⁴⁵

The German Government, rather upset by the British proposal, found itself on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, it had a keen interest in Simon Kopper being removed from the border. On the other hand, its prestige would be in jeopardy if the shabby deal were to become known to the public. The Reich Colonial Office's standpoint was as follows: "According to our view, which is shared by the High Command of the Protective Force, it is desirable, in principle, to prevent any rebel activity with a view to ensuring the peaceful development of the Protectorate and to reduce the number of troops there. As for Selborne's proposal, it involves a risk to our prestige, especially after the success of the Kalahari expedition and the toll it has taken. Most importantly, such an agreement would be interpreted as a sign of weakness by the natives."¹⁴⁶ The Governor of South West Africa stated in his reply: "I agree with the position of the Imperial Colonial Office, but I feel that we ought not to reject the proposal out of hand because our prestige among the native population would not suffer even if we offered Simon Kopper some money, which would be cheaper and afford more security than a large body of troops in the Kalahari. My proposal is that we should agree to defray part of the cost incurred in the capture of Simon Kopper."¹⁴⁷ Lindequist did not hesitate to take up the Governor's proposal which seemed to offer a way out of the dilemma: The British would fit out an expedition against Simon Kopper and the Reich Colonial Office would undertake to meet half of the cost involved.¹⁴⁸ After Lindequist had cherished this illusion for two months or so, the Foreign Office in London rejected the German proposal as "unacceptable to Britain"—not on political grounds, but owing to technical difficulties.

So the German Government had no choice but to revert to the British proposal. Early in October 1908 Selborne requested Governor Schuckmann to inform him (i) of the maximum amount to be paid as an annual salary, and (ii) whether Simon Kopper was to be made to believe that the salary was coming from the

British Government. Thereupon Schuckmann got into touch with the Reich Colonial Office: "I intend to answer question No. 2 in the affirmative. As for question No. 1, how far am I allowed to go? My suggestion is 10,000 Marks. The cost of expeditions and border protection arrangements would be much higher."¹⁴⁹ Dernburg acquiesced in Schuckmann's proposals, but felt that an annual payment of 4,000 Marks was sufficient. To be on the safe side, however, he authorized the Colonial Administration to agree to a maximum amount of 10,000 Marks if this should become necessary."¹⁵⁰

A letter addressed by Dernburg to the State Secretary of the Foreign Office, mentions the interesting fact that the mere presence of Simon Kopper near the border of one of the German Reich's overseas possessions necessitated the spending of two million Marks a year. Dernburg said "that the annual expenditure of approximately two million Marks required for the upkeep of three companies to protect the German border from Simon Kopper can no longer be justified as soon as the same aim can be achieved by paying a minimal sum."¹⁵¹

Dernburg's next problem was to secure the money he needed. To ask the Reichstag to provide it was out of the question because the deal to be made with Whitehall was to be in the nature of a secret agreement. He observed on this score: "In particular, it will be essential to conceal our participation in the annual allowance so as to prevent the natives in our Protectorate putting a false construction on the whole affair."¹⁵² These were the considerations that led him to call on the State Secretary to siphon off the money from the Foreign Office's secret fund. When the latter declined to do so, there ensued months of haggling between the Colonial Office, the Foreign Office and the Imperial Treasury about who was responsible for paying an annual salary to Simon Kopper.

A note from the British Foreign Office in February 1909 put an end to the bickering among the three German government departments. It said that the Bechuanaland police had succeeded in making a deal with Simon Kopper, whereby he had pledged to cease hostilities against South West Africa and not to leave his present place of residence without permission. In return, he was to receive £100 in the first year, £75 in the second year and £60 in each following year until his death.¹⁵³ The Imperial Chancellor, Prince Bernhard von Bülow, was highly pleased with this arrangement.¹⁵⁴ The military, however, refused to draw any conclusions from the agreement made with Simon Kopper. Thus, Estorff declared that "for the time being the current deployment of the Protective Force along the eastern border must not be altered,"¹⁵⁵ a view which Division M of the Reich Colonial Office "shared to all intents and purposes".

Through the pact with Simon Kopper the German Government had at last accomplished what it had been seeking for five years: an end to the fighting in South West Africa. But it owed this fact not to the military prowess of its armies, but to the diplomatic skill of the British.

Incidentally, Kopper strictly honoured the agreement he had concluded. Hintzinger reported one year later that Kopper's tribe had "fortunately" been decimat-

ed by fever. As for Simon Kopper himself, he died in Bechuanaland on 31 January 1913.¹⁵⁶

Herero Slave Labourers

How many Herero and Nama survived the genocide in South West Africa? From early 1905 General von Trotha was forced to take prisoners in South West Africa. The number of Herero taken captive—men, women and children—swelled rapidly, attaining 4,100 by early March 1905¹⁵⁷ and 8,040 by late May 1905.¹⁵⁸ Prisoners of war were immediately carted off to Swakopmund to perform slave labour, the most gruelling jobs on the railway line under construction there being assigned to them. The death rate among them was extremely high. In the brief period, 13 February to 28 March 1905, 125 out of 1,000 Herero died, primarily as a result of the humid climate.¹⁵⁹ Tecklenburg made the following comment on the high mortality rate among the captured Herero: *"The more the Herero people experience personally the consequences of the rebellion, the less will be their desire—and that of generations to come—to stage another uprising. Our military successes have not made much of an impression on them. But the ordeal they are now undergoing is bound to have a more lasting effect."*¹⁶⁰ [My emphasis—H. D.]

The inhuman working and living conditions to which the captured Herero were subjected impelled ever greater numbers to try to escape. Thus, von Trotha had to report on 10 March 1905 that another 30 prisoners of war had melted away despite barbed wire and tight security. In May 1905 a further 65 Herero made their escape. Any fugitives who were caught were put to death without mercy. At the end of 1905 von Trotha was succeeded as Governor by Friedrich von Lindequist, who began to edge back to Leutwein's policy towards the Africans. By way of a proclamation issued on 1 December 1905, the new chief administrator informed the so-called Field Herero that he had directed the missionaries, Diehl and Kuhlmann, to establish two reception camps at Omburo and Otjihaenena where they would be brought together. The Herero were given assurances that military operations in Hereroland and the raiding of Herero *werfs* by German troops would be discontinued, effective 20 December 1905.¹⁶¹

The missionaries were relatively successful. By early April some 6,000 Herero, all of them mere skin and bone, had come to fill the camps.¹⁶² Although they had been on the verge of starvation when they arrived, they were made to perform slave labour after a very brief span of time. Among the Herero still at large who had so far escaped annihilation by the Germans, there arose a fierce controversy about what attitude to adopt towards their colonial masters. A major portion of these "Field Herero" refused to surrender to the Germans. They wanted no truck with the colonial rulers who had destroyed their people. Yet a section of the Herero who found their hand-to-mouth existence unbearable placed themselves

in the hands of the missionaries. The indications are that most of them had been under the influence of the Mission even before the Herero uprising.

The question of the surrender of those Herero still at liberty began to be of fundamental importance. Those of the Herero who were in no mood to yield to their German colonial masters used armed force to stop those willing to surrender from doing so. Under these circumstances, Lindequist was able to report to Berlin on a contented note: "Quite apart from the fact that the Herero are giving themselves up in large numbers, it must also be seen as a success that they are now also fighting against each other."¹⁶³

By 1 May 1906 the total number of captured Herero had climbed to 14,769, no distinction being made between prisoners of war and "Field Herero" who had surrendered of their own free will. The breakdown was as follows: 3,237 men, 5,289 women and 4,023 children, not counting those assigned to the construction of the Otavi railway, i.e. another 900 men, 700 women and 620 children (as of 1 April 1906).¹⁶⁴

Describing the situation in Hereroland, Governor Lindequist reported to the Colonial Department after a visit undertaken in mid-1906: "The northern and central parts of the country, in particular Hereroland proper, are virtually devoid of Herero. I have, admittedly, seen footprints here and there in the vicinity of Omurambana-Matako. But these belong to just a few who have not yet mustered sufficient courage and faith to trust themselves to the hands of the missionaries at the reception camps and who are now eking out a miserable existence, being conspicuous only by the occasional theft of cattle. The Herero have lost the will to fight arms in hand and to put up resistance. Those still roaming about will consider themselves lucky if they come to no harm."¹⁶⁵

The camps having been in existence for about seven months, surprisingly they were dismantled in early August 1906. The reason for this shift in policy towards the Herero was the "complaints" of German settlers that such a concentration of Herero invoked the spectre of a fresh uprising. In fact, these "complaints" were little more than a thinly disguised manoeuvre on the part of the settlers to secure permission to exploit the captives for their own purposes. Hitherto, the Herero had been employed exclusively in groups on public works. As the camps had outlived their usefulness as far as the colonial authorities were concerned and a further influx of Herero was rather unlikely, Lindequist gave in to the pressure, dissolved the camps and "distributed" the Herero among the settlers.¹⁶⁶

The Governor gave the following account of the forcible dissolution of the Omburo camp, expressing mild criticism of the methods used, but not, of course, of the fact itself as he had been the man who had ordered the operation: "On the 9th inst. [i.e. August 1906-H. D.] the Herero reception camp at Omburo was surrounded by mounted soldiers on the orders of Lieutenant Hellmich, the commandant of Omaruru, and all the Herero were transported to Omaruru. What with several Herero having escaped on that occasion and a number of native patrols still at large, there is a danger of the Herero who have not yet surrendered

learning of that forcible deportation, which would discourage them from giving themselves up. The background of the incident is this: after the round-up was declared over in the western part of Hereroland, the area was to be patrolled once again before the onset of the rainy season. Plans were for the reception camp at Omburo to be closed down, with only the missionary Kuhlmann and 20 Herero families remaining there to receive any natives that might yet give themselves up.

"Unlike the missionary Diehl, who is stationed in Otjihaenena, the missionary Kuhlmann was exceedingly lenient in his treatment of the Herero, allowing them too much latitude. Therefore, while the evacuation was to be speeded up, it was to be supervised by the missionary himself in the usual fashion. An order to this effect addressed by the Line of Communications Command to the commandant of Omaruru was interpreted by the latter as an instruction to evacuate the Herero from Omburo.

"In view of previous incidents involving the Herero reception camp, Lieutenant Hellmich ought to have realized that the construction he had put on the orders he had received from headquarters could not possibly have been correct, all the more so as I had meanwhile issued a directive which left no doubt whatever that I had no plans for a forcible evacuation. Under these circumstances, it would have been absolutely necessary to despatch a cable asking for clarifications . . .

"A fact that should not go unmentioned is that the judgement of the officer in question was adversely affected by a number of inflammatory articles in the *Südwestafrikanische Zeitung*, written by a merchant from Omaruru who for apparently selfish reasons was taking a highly critical view of the Rhenish Mission."¹⁶⁷

After the camps had been closed down, Lindequist, reneging on the pledge given in his proclamation of 1 December 1905, ordered military operations—in other words, raids on *werfs* of the Herero—to be resumed.

As a result of the genocide they had committed against the Herero in the Omaheke sandveld and of their policy of extermination towards the Nama and Bergdamara, the Germans soon had to contend with an acute shortage of manpower. In his search for a way out of the dilemma, Governor Lindequist in August 1907 hit upon the idea of trying to persuade the Herero who had taken refuge on the shores of Lake Ngami on British-ruled territory to return to South West Africa. Having secured Lord Selborne's consent, he despatched Captain Streitwolf, the district officer at Gobabis, and the missionary, Meier, to Lake Ngami in an attempt to lure the Herero back to South West Africa.¹⁶⁸ The new Governor, Bruno von Schuckmann, wanted the negotiations to take place on the following basis: "1. The Governor, conscious of their desire to return home, would forget everything and permit them to settle at Otjihaenena. 2. They would be allowed to keep the cattle in their possession, and grazing land would be allocated to them. There could be no question, however, of an unlimited increase in their cattle holdings, the size of their herds being dependent on the conditions for grazing. They would no longer own the land, but enjoy permission to use it as long as they respected law and order. 3. So as to earn some money and acquire some movable

property, the eldest among them should urge younger people to seek jobs which would be made available. The workers should take their wives and other dependents with them. At the same time, the Herero should be warned that they no longer owned any land and that able-bodied persons would not be allowed to while away their time near the cattle herds."¹⁶⁹

Captain Streitwolf gave a most intriguing account of his journey to Lake Ngami. He said that on the first day he did not mention the purpose of his visit, instead having a friendly chat with the Herero, talking about this and that. And then, "on the second day, when I said to Traugott that the war was over and that he could come back, I realized at once that he would never do so. Later on, he said quite openly that he was frightened and that if we could forget the war—which he found difficult to believe—he was not the man to forget it. After all, he asked, what point was there for him to go to a country where he would live in constant fear of being shot down like a klipspringer, unarmed as he was? When I asked him whether he was afraid of me or the Governor, he said 'No', what was frightening him was the whole country."

But Streitwolf did not let matters rest there. After his first bid to come to terms with the headman had failed, he made an attempt to reach an understanding with the ordinary Herero behind the back of their headman. In his report he stated: "Here again, no one indicated a desire to return. Clapping their hands, they flatly rejected my offer. So I broke off all negotiations, having become sick and tired of my embarrassing mission which had kept me 14 days at Tsau. Whether the Herero had any intention of returning or not is anybody's guess. My impression was that it had never occurred to them."¹⁷⁰

Plans to Deport the Nama

While the German imperialists evinced some interest in the surviving Herero as potential slave labourers, their attitude towards the Nama was quite different. In the pseudo-scientific racist thinking of their colonial masters, the Nama figured as a lazy and work-shy breed doomed to extinction. The conclusion drawn from this basic proposition was: "Once the rebellion is over, the Hottentots, or rather what will have remained of them, ought to be shipped to Togo or some other German colony where they will do no harm, but rather vanish from the scene in the not too distant future."¹⁷¹ The files of the Imperial Colonial Office show beyond any doubt that these plans to deport and destroy the Nama were no figments of the imagination of a handful of "maniacs", but the *official policy of the German Government*.

On 10 July 1906 Governor Lindequist sent a telegram to the Colonial Department saying that Deimling had suggested "going ahead at once with the deportation of Hottentots, a measure I had envisaged for after the end of the war. As I have no objections to raise, especially in view of the recent escape of captured Witboois,

I propose that the entire Witbooi tribe be deported to Samoa while the followers of Cornelius of Bethanie and those of Simon Kopper's people who have been captured should be sent to Adamaua [in the Cameroons-H. D.]. It would be most unwise to limit the deportation to the headmen."¹⁷²

The Director of the Colonial Department called a conference to discuss the matter. Before any decision could be made, it was deemed necessary to ask Lindequist by cable to specify the numbers to be deported. The answer was: "The Witboois total 1,599, including 501 men and 9 headmen, and the Bethanie people total 191, including 107 men and 8 headmen."¹⁷³ Considering the cost of transport too high,¹⁷⁴ the Colonial Department threw out the whole idea: "We are not contemplating the deportation of entire tribes. But the deportation of the headmen to Adamaua may go ahead."¹⁷⁵ Thereupon Lindequist demanded that at least 42 Nama should be deported forthwith.

The Colonial Department wanted to see the 42 Nama packed off to the Cameroons, but the authorities there rejected the proposal as "risky on account of the political situation". So the Department held another conference which then determined that the 42 be despatched to some South Sea island. But since the cost involved remained a major issue despite the small number of Nama earmarked for deportation, the whole affair was quietly dropped, a development aided by certain events in South West Africa.

As it was, the German colonialists had discovered a cheaper method of decimating the Nama. Until mid-1906 the Witboois and the Bethanie people had been kept in concentration camps at Windhoek and Karibib, respectively. When Colonel Berthold von Deimling took over as new Commander-in-Chief in South West Africa, he ordered, in a renewed violation of the peace terms negotiated with the Nama,¹⁷⁶ that they be transferred to Shark Island in Lüderitz Bay, ostensibly because no guards would be needed there.¹⁷⁷ This was the actual reason for shelving the question of deportation to other German colonies. Lindequist noted in this context: "Since the Hottentots are at present safely confined to Shark Island where they are performing very useful work (?), I feel that their deportation may still be postponed somewhat. Perhaps one should wait and see first how the situation will develop and whether the numbers to be deported might be reduced so as to cut down the cost incurred."¹⁷⁸

The Human Cost

The transfer of the Witboois and the Bethanie people to Shark Island marked the beginning of a harrowing ordeal on what came soon to be known as "Death Island". Unaccustomed to the humid and chilly climate prevailing there the Nama died like flies. 276 of them perished in December 1906 alone. The missionary, Laaf, reported that Samuel Isaak had declared in December 1906: "Dat volk is gedaan" (These people are doomed), and went on to observe: "If things go on like

this, it will not be long before they have died out altogether."¹⁷⁹ Cornelius, the leader of the Bethanie people, himself succumbed on 16 February 1907.

In early April 1907, believing that the staggering death rate among the Nama on Shark Island could no longer be kept a secret, von Estorff sent a report to the Colonial Department which came like a bolt out of the blue. In his report, which was immediately marked "strictly confidential", he said that of the surviving "245 men a mere 25 are periodically fit for work, whereas all the others are going about on crutches so that if they remain on Shark Island they will be facing a slow, but certain death. Since September 1906, 1,032 out of 1,795 natives have died on Shark Island. I am not prepared to assume responsibility for the killing nor can I expect my officers to do so, all the more so as the transfer of the Hottentots to Shark Island and their detention there have been in breach of the promise which I made to Samuel Isaak and his people on their surrender, with the permission of the Commander-in-Chief."¹⁸⁰ Given these circumstances, von Estorff ordered the surviving Nama to be shipped back to the mainland. This brought an immediate sharp protest from Oskar Hintrager, the Governor's deputy: "I am in favour of the prisoners staying on the island until the situation in the country has been fully restored to normal because outside the island they cannot be prevented from escaping whatever precautions are taken."¹⁸¹

In response to Estorff's report, Dernburg agreed to the proposal that the survivors be transported back to mainland, simultaneously asking for details about the conditions obtaining on Shark Island. The telegram which Estorff sent in reply shows that the death rate there had been very high right from the outset, with 66 Nama dying in September, 143 in October, 166 in November, 276 in December, 247 in January, 143 in February and 155 in March. In view of the heavy mortality in December and January, headquarters ordered that at least surviving women and children should be brought back to the mainland. This, too, elicited an angry response from Hintrager: "I oppose this measure on the grounds that it endangers security and runs counter to our policy towards the natives."¹⁸² So Estorff reported: "Plans at headquarters to take women and children to the north where the climate is more wholesome have been opposed by the Administration [i.e. Hintrager-H. D.] which has requested that they be taken back to the island, recalling that Britain has allowed 10,000 women and children to die in camps in South Africa."¹⁸³

The Lüderitz Bay district office, acting on orders from Dernburg, on 26 April 1907 filed a report on the number and state of health of the surviving Nama who had been transported from Shark Island to the mainland. The report says: "As of 24th inst. the number of Witboois and Bethanie people accomodated here was as follows:

| | Men | Women | Children | Total |
|---------------------|-----|-------|----------|-------|
| Samuel Isaak people | 82 | 160 | 83 | 325 |
| Cornelius people | 69 | 119 | 60 | 248 |
| Total | 151 | 279 | 143 | 573 |

"... The state of health of the prisoners, even though it has greatly improved since 10th inst., the day they left the island, is still so delicate that it is hard to imagine them escaping in large numbers. As of 24th inst. the following were in such a critical condition that they are likely to die:

| | Men | Women | Children | Total |
|---------------------|-----|-------|----------|-------|
| Samuel Isaak people | 27 | 20 | 21 | 68 |
| Cornelius people | 29 | 18 | 8 | 55 |
| Total | 56 | 38 | 29 | 123 |

"As for the remainder, 50 per cent of the men, 25 per cent of the women and 25 per cent of the children were ill, some of them with the prospect of recovery.

"The improvement in their condition can be primarily seen from the decline in the death rate, which has dropped to one-fifth since they left the island. Samuel Isaak is unable to walk because of illness."¹⁸⁴

And these unfortunate prisoners, lying at death's door, were, in Hintrager's words,¹⁸⁵ a risk to "the security of the whites". Incidentally, apart from Witboois and Bethanie people, there had also been a few hundred Herero on Shark Island. As emerges from correspondence between the Colonial Administration and the High Command these had invariably been sent there as a "punitive measure". One report noted: "The Herero are frightened by the idea of being deported there. If a sizeable number are sent there, the probability is that many prisoners will escape. Permission is requested, therefore, to deport no more than 80 prisoners per month there."¹⁸⁶

Taking stock of the losses which the South West African people suffered between 1904 and 1907 as a result of the German policy of annihilation, one can give a relatively accurate answer to the crucial question as to how many Herero and Nama survived German captivity. The answer is found among the records of the Imperial Colonial Office in a "Report on the Mortality in Prisoner-of-War Camps in German South West Africa" drawn up by the High Command of the "Protective Force". Summing up, the report states: "According to despatches covering the period from October 1904 to March 1907 a total of 7,682 of the approximately 15,000 Herero and 2,000 Hottentots, or 45.2 per cent of all prisoners, have died."¹⁸⁷ [This writer's emphasis-H. D.] In other words, almost half of them were wiped out.

However, as not all Herero and Nama had been captured, the number of prisoners who survived is not identical with the number of those who actually escaped the German policy of extermination. In a report made in December 1906 Deimling put the number of Africans not in German captivity at about 15,000.¹⁸⁸ They included the Bondelswarts, the Berseba community, the Keetmanshoop tribe and the so-called Field Herero. When the 9,300 surviving prisoners are added to Deimling's estimate, one arrives at a total of 25,000 Herero and Nama who had escaped with their lives.

To compute the losses which the South West African population sustained in human terms between 1904 and 1907 owing to the savagery of the German methods of warfare, the official census taken in 1911 can be the basis. *'It shows that in 1911 there were a mere 15,130 Herero left out of an original 80,000 and 9,781 Nama out of an original 20,000.'*¹⁸⁰ No fewer than 80 per cent of the Herero and 50 per cent of the Nama had thus fallen victim to German colonial rule. In addition, one-third of the Berg Damara, who had not joined in the uprising, were killed simply because the German troops were unable to tell them from the Herero. Such was the staggering human cost of German colonial rule in South West Africa. To this one has to add the plunder which accompanied the killing.

Final Expropriation

The uprisings offered German imperialism a welcome pretext to conquer the territory militarily, a task that had not yet been undertaken, in order to settle the land issue definitely in its own interests. As early as May 1905 the Colonial Department called on the authorities in Windhoek to work out, "as soon as possible", a scheme for the expropriation of the Africans. The missive said: "Once the situation in the Protectorate has returned to normal, it will be one of the most pressing tasks of the Administration to resolve the question of how to treat the natives directly or indirectly involved in the recent rebellions in respect of their movable and immovable property.

"In order to settle this issue, I am seeking an Imperial Decree which will not be confined to cases of immediate interest, but applicable to the Protectorate generally. To this end, I request the Imperial Administration to submit the draft for such a decree as soon as possible. As far as this can be judged from here, the following aspects should be taken into consideration in preparing the draft:

"1. Under what conditions can the movable and immovable property of natives be confiscated for the benefit of the South West African Treasury? The natives affected would be those who have committed, or aided and abetted, warlike acts against the German Government or against natives in the Protectorate . . .

"2. What line ought to be taken if, as has happened in the case of the Bethanie tribe, part of the tribe takes part in the rebellion while another remains loyal?

"3. Should only tribal property be confiscated or individual property as well?

"4. Should the reserves, which have been established by Imperial Decree of 10 April 1898, be confiscated, too? . . .

"In conclusion, I should like to point out that the projected draft will also have to make provision for the *abrogation of the protection treaties*. Enclosed you find a copy in French of the sequestration order issued for Algiers on 31 October 1845, a directive that is still in force and contains many a valuable hint for the draft to be submitted."¹⁸¹

Within two months of this, Hans Tecklenburg, Deputy Governor of South West

Africa, came up with a detailed report outlining the standpoint of the Colonial Administration on the expropriation of the South West African population. He said, *inter alia*: "The tribal property of the tribes fully or partly involved in the rebellion will be subject to confiscation. Whether they have carried out, or aided and abetted, warlike acts will make no difference. *It would be a sign of weakness, for which we would have to pay dearly, if we allowed the present opportunity of declaring all native land to be Crown territory to slip by.* Only the territory of the Rehoboth Bastards must remain in the possession of the natives for the time being . . . The non-rebellious section of tribes partly involved in the uprising (e.g. the Berseba Hottentots) may be granted the free use of part of their former tribal area by the Governor for the lifetime of their kaptein or as long as political considerations make this necessary . . .

"With the confiscation of their land, the natives will be deprived of the possibility of raising cattle. All objections notwithstanding, they must not, as a matter of principle, be allowed to own cattle because they cannot be conceded the grazing lands required for this purpose. For the moment, however, the non-rebellious natives and especially the Bastards, will be allowed to keep their cattle and horses nor will these be taken away from the Berseba Hottentots.

"The reserves established by Imperial Decree of 10 April 1898 will *have to be confiscated by all means.* This plan will be relatively easy to put into execution as few reserves have been created thus far . . . The reserves can be abolished without difficulty with one stroke of the pen. The only tribal area to remain, apart from Ovamboland, would be that of the Rehoboth Bastards. Besides, the area of the Berseba Hottentots would also be spared for the time being. Some kind of locations would be created for the other natives, *but any form of tribal organization would be eliminated and the treaties concluded with the former tribes annulled.* The natives would be settled on individual *werfs* in proximity to the places of residence of the whites. Those living on such *werfs* will serve as labourers to individual farmers . . . *Werfs* in outlying areas not subject to police control will not be tolerated. They would only provide a nucleus keeping alive memories of the tribal system and land ownership. No major community of natives must be left to their own devices lest they form a self-contained unit. Freedom of movement will be abolished and passes will be introduced as a compulsory measure. Some districts have already made a move in this direction. The natives have been given an identification tag with a number, the name of the district and the Imperial Crown imprinted on it. The introduction of the tag, which is seen as the 'Emperor's sign', has proved quite a success. In due course it will be possible to register the natives so identified—or rather the men to begin with—and to keep a closer watch on their movements and activities. Any native found without a tag can then be arrested as a person of no fixed abode . . .

"I frankly admit that my proposals are of a very draconian nature. Yet half-way measures would only cause resentment without breaking resistance once and for all and ruling out another rebellion . . . Here in this settler colony the natives

must never be allowed to forget for a single moment that they are in a country ruled by the white man and that they are subject to German legislation. All the sacrifices made in terms of blood and gold will then not have been made in vain."¹⁹¹

On the basis of Tecklenburg's report, the Colonial Department, acting in conjunction with the Imperial Ministry of Justice, spent the next few months working out the Imperial Decree that was to provide the legal foundation for the dispossession of the Herero and the Nama. On 24 December 1905, Chancellor Bülow transmitted the draft to the Kaiser who endorsed it two days later. What thus became the "Imperial Decree of 26 December 1905 Pertaining to the Sequestration of Property of Natives in the Protectorate of South West Africa" afforded the Governor a legal instrument that enabled him to "sequester" the land of Africans at his discretion. Indeed, Lindequist promptly declared the whole of Hereroland Crown land. A few months later, after the expiry of a hypothetical "deadline for appeals", the Governor reported smugly that the decree had become unassailable: "All legal impediments have thus been removed that stood in the way of granting the numerous applications made for the acquisition of farms and homesteads in Hereroland."¹⁹²

Why Lindequist did not "sequester" Namaland simultaneously with Hereroland emerges from a message to the Colonial Department dated 25 April 1906: "I consider it premature to take action against the Nama tribes at the present stage. Although welcome progress has been made in getting them under control over the last few months, the fact remains that a sizeable number of Hottentots are still roaming about freely in bands large and small. As long as a leader as skillful and influential as Morenga has not fallen into our hands, we must avoid everything that might rekindle the rebellion. The seizure of land might, in fact, have some impact on those among the Nama who have not yet laid down their arms. The realization that they would have to make a living through work in the absence of any tribal property would have diminished their readiness to surrender in the near future. On these grounds I have, for the time being, restricted my sequestration order to the rebellious Herero and the Zwartbooi Hottentots of Franzfontein and the Topnaar Hottentots of Zessfontein, these being communities isolated from the other Nama."¹⁹³

About a year later, on 8 May 1907, when Morenga's death made the Governor's cautious approach towards the Nama no longer necessary, Hintrager issued a new directive ordering Namaland to be confiscated as well. The whole of Hereroland and Namaland, with the exception only of the area of the Berseba tribe, had thus passed into the possession of the German colonialists.

The Imperial Decree of 26 December 1905 was severely criticized in the German Reichstag. A young deputy of the Centre Party, Matthias Erzberger, led off by characterizing the Decree as follows: "Basically, it amounts to nothing else but robbery on a large scale, with the natives suffering more or less, depending on the way it is carried out. It is not only that the tribal system is to be abolished, which one may find understandable, but all tribal property is to be taken away

from the natives. In this day and age such plunder is unworthy of a State which has inscribed law and justice on its banner. If put into operation, the Decree will leave the natives in South West Africa impoverished and enslaved, making it impossible for them to improve their lot by their own efforts. So the ideal of the 'economically oriented colonial politicians' is nearing realization: the blacks will serve as lowly toilers for the white man. The Decree marks the entry of modern slavery into South West Africa."¹⁹⁴

In point of fact, Erzberger was not fundamentally opposed to an imperialist colonial policy. His concern was to keep it within certain limits.¹⁹⁵ August Bebel, on the other hand, did not mince matters when he declared on behalf of the German Social Democrats: "Gentlemen, with the Decree promulgated in December last, our colonial people have achieved in the end what they have always urged should be done from the moment the uprising broke out." He said the uprising had merely served as a pretext to "wrest the land from the natives and transfer it to the settlers." Concurrently, Bebel pointed out that the German imperialists had set their sights on more than South West Africa: "We are well aware that the Government would be only too happy to grab the whole of Africa if it were given a chance."¹⁹⁶

Following the intervention of the Social Democratic Party, the Reichstag on 30 May 1906 adopted a resolution calling on the Government to hand back to the Nama and Herero as much land as they needed to make a living.¹⁹⁷ The Government, however, in a demonstration of its contempt for the German Parliament, completely ignored this resolution. In December 1906 Lindequist observed sarcastically during a meeting of the Budgetary Committee that the resolution had been impracticable "because without cattle the Herero have no use for the land."¹⁹⁸

The Beneficiaries of the War

The war in South West Africa cost the German taxpayer something like 600 million Marks.¹⁹⁹ This huge sum ended up in the coffers of a tiny minority for whom the conflict proved a real bonanza.

Chief among the beneficiaries of the war were the big land companies in South West Africa who were still biding their time. They unhesitatingly embraced the commercial opportunity afforded them by the campaign in South West Africa. Indeed, the oldest and biggest among them, the German South West Africa Company or *Kolonialgesellschaft*, plunged so vehemently into the trading business that it was soon nicknamed in South West Africa the *Kolonialwarengesellschaft* (grocery company).²⁰⁰ In the financial year 1904-5 it rang up sales to the tune of 830,000 Marks, making a handsome profit of approximately 230,000 Marks. The company, which had up to then never paid a dividend to its shareholders, did not do so, either, at the end of the financial year 1904-5 because "in the light of the attacks being mounted everywhere on the big land companies, it seems inappropriate to pay a dividend this year ... especially when one takes into account

that the current financial year promises to yield profits similar to last year's."³⁰¹ The disposable assets of the German South West Africa Company, down to 165,000 Marks as of 31 March 1902, had shot up to 1,981,000 Marks by 3 October 1906. In 1905-6 the company's net earnings amounted to 752,000 Marks. The profits made enabled it to distribute a 20 per cent dividend, i.e. 400,000 Marks, in each of the following financial years: 1905-6, 1906-7 and 1907-8.

Another major beneficiary of the war was the Hamburg shipping magnate, Adolf Woermann, whose firm enjoyed a near monopoly over all freight shipments to South West Africa. After the deputy, Matthias Erzberger, had pointed out in the Reichstag as early as 24 March 1906 that the Woermann line had raked in 3,000,000 Marks by charging exorbitant freight rates and another 3,000,000 by falsely claiming demurrage,³⁰² he returned to Woermann's fraudulent practices in a message to Chancellor Bülow dated 2 August 1906. Erzberger had meanwhile got possession of new material indicating that the Woermann line "receives 185 Marks per tonne in the same space of time in which another cargo ship makes about 20 Marks."³⁰³

For Messrs Tippelskirch, a firm supplying equipment for the colonial troops, the war overseas was also a most lucrative affair. Among its joint owners were the Prussian Minister of Agriculture, Podbielski, and several legation counsellors from the Colonial Department. Thanks to its excellent connections in high places, the firm was the sole supplier of equipment for the "Protective Force". Although the goods delivered were conspicuous for their poor quality and high prices the protests coming from the military were to no avail as Major Fischer, the man responsible for ordering and inspecting the equipment, had been bribed by Tippelskirch. Whereas in the period 1899-1903 the company's turnover had been in the neighbourhood of 2,000,000 Marks per annum, with a dividend averaging 10.7. per cent, the sales figure soared to about 11,000,000 Marks in 1904 and 1905 on account of the war in South West Africa. As a result, Messrs Tippelskirch were in a position to ladle out a 65 per cent dividend in these two years.

However, the war profiteers were to be found not only in Germany, but in Britain and Cape Colony as well. The close political collaboration between German and British imperialism during the war was in no small measure based on economic cooperation. When the Nama uprising broke out, the German Government depended on British-ruled South Africa as a supply base for the German troops in Namaland.³⁰⁴ The German interest suited British interests quite well as the Cape Colony was in a state of economic stagnation at the time. The resourceful von Jacobs, interim head of the German Consulate-General, channelled millions of German taxpayers' money into the Cape Colony to organize the supply of the German troops in Namaland. In his choice of clients he concentrated on British land companies in South West Africa, e.g. the South African Territories Company, and on merchants in Cape Town closely associated with South African political leaders³⁰⁵ so that pressure could be brought to bear on the British or South African parliaments in the event of difficulties arising.

Lord Milner, the High Commissioner for South Africa at the time, was sympathetic to the German plans. As von Jacobs reported, Milner had told him "he considered the rebellion in the German Protectorate a threat to the peace of the whole of South Africa and therefore had the sincere desire to be as helpful as possible to the Imperial Government during the current military campaign."²⁹⁶ Milner's successor, Lord Selborne, appears to have been even more accommodating. According to von Jacobs, he stated: "I hope the brave German troops will succeed in subduing the rebels shortly because this would benefit British rule in South Africa. This is one of the reasons why I will gladly do whatever depends on me."²⁹⁷ But the most important figure of all was Dr. L. Starr Jameson, the Premier of the Cape Colony. Nettelbladt, an agent of the German Consul-General in Cape Town, said of him: "Dr. Jameson has repeatedly made it clear that the sympathies of his Government lie with the German side."²⁹⁸

These few examples may be sufficient to illustrate the close collaboration between German and British imperialists in Southern Africa. There can be no reasonable doubt that without British connivance German imperialism would have found it extremely difficult to see through to the end its bloody settling of accounts with the Herero and the Nama.

Notes

- 1 DKZ, Vol. 21, 1904, p. 190. In a report to the Col. Dept., Leturwein drew attention to the fact that the "von François family" was spearheading the campaign being carried on in Germany against Hendrik Witbooi. Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2133, p. 4, Leturwein to the Col. Dept., 26 Aug. 1904.
- 2 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2154, p. 94, Tecklenburg to Leturwein, 26 March 1904.
- 3 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2133, p. 37, Leturwein to Wasserfall, 19 April 1904.
- 4 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2114, pp. 34-5, Stuebel to Leturwein, 23 April 1904.
- 5 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2115, pp. 112-3, Leturwein to the Col. Dept., 5 June 1904.
- 6 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2133, pp. 37-8, Leturwein to Wasserfall, 14 May 1904.
- 7 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2154, p. 136, Leturwein to the Col. Dept., 25 June 1904. Leturwein also mentioned in this report that the director of the stud-farm, Clave, had told him the following: "The Hottentots say they know only too well that after the Herero war they will have their arms taken away. This has been suggested to them by the *Südwestafrikanische Zeitung* and by the silly talk of white people."
- 8 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2133, pp. 32-4, Schmidt to Leturwein, 24 Aug. 1904.
- 9 The exact date of his return is not known. The safest hint was provided by Morenga himself. Asked by journalists in May 1906 how long he had been fighting the Germans, he answered: For two years and five months. (Cf. *Cape Times*, 29 May 1906). By that reckoning, he had returned to South West Africa in late December 1903. With regard to Morenga, cf. Horst Drechsler, 'Jacob Morenga: A New Kind of South-West African Leader', in *African Studies*, ed. by W. Markov, Leipzig 1967, pp. 95-105.
- 10 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2133, pp. 80-1, Schmidt to Lindequist, 4 Sept. 1904.
- 11 Since Morenga was one of the most active leaders of the Bondelswarts, the Germans were bent on getting rid of him at all costs. They outlawed him on the pretext that during

- the fighting he had shot a nephew of Hendrik Witbooi who had fought on the German side. Cf. Leurwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, Berlin, 1906, p. 321.
- 12 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2154, pp. 138-9, Burgsdorff to Leurwein, 15 June 1904.
 - 13 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2133, p. 91, Schmidt to the Col. Dept, 19 Sept. 1904, and p. 114, Schmidt to the Col. Dept. 3 Oct. 1904. Cf. also Correspondenz Wedekind, No. 583, 12 Nov. 1904.
 - 14 In May 1906 Morenga was asked by a British journalist whether he was aware that Germany was one of the mightiest military powers in the world. "Yes, I am aware of it," Morenga replied, "but they [the Germans - H. D.] cannot fight in our country. They do not know where to get water, and do not understand guerrilla warfare." Cf. *Cape Times*, 29 May 1906.
 - 15 Cf. *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika, auf Grund amtlichen Materials bearbeitet von der Kriegsgeschichtlichen Abteilung I des Grossen Generalstabes*, Vol. 2, Berlin, 1907, p. 11.
 - 16 *Ibid.*, p. 12. Deimling reported that the German company commander received a letter the next day in which Morenga "requested him to feed his horses better in future because he had no use for emaciated nags like these." Deimling, B. von, *Aus der alten in die neue Zeit. Lebenserinnerungen*, Berlin, 1930, p. 74.
 - 17 Cf. *The Owl*, 10 Feb. 1905.
 - 18 Cf. *Cape Times*, 29 May 1906. It should be borne in mind, however, that he expressed this opinion while held in the custody of the British.
 - 19 Shortly before, in late August 1904, Leurwein had asked the Col. Dept. in one of his reports to raise Hendrik Witbooi's annual salary from 3,500 to 5,000 Marks ... as a reward for his loyalty." Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2133, pp. 29-33, Leurwein to the Col. Dept., 11 Nov. 1904.
 - 20 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2134, pp. 29-33, Leurwein to the Col. Dept., 11 Nov. 1904.
 - 21 Leurwein said on this score: "When Witbooi struck, after having helped us over the critical initial period of the Herero uprising by fighting on our side, this came a bit too early for us, but at any rate too late for him. This fact in itself proves that the kaptein has not planned the rebellion long in advance, but has only lately allowed himself to be dragged into it as a result of persistent interventions by both whites and natives, which have been repeatedly mentioned before." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2133, p. 145, Leurwein to the Col. Dept., 14 Oct. 1904. Cf. also Leurwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, p. 454, and Deimling, B. von, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
 - 22 Since no records of African provenance are available, this view cannot be substantiated. Cf. e. g. Schwabe, Kurd, *Im deutschen Diamantelande. Deutsch-Südwestafrika von der Errichtung der deutschen Herrschaft bis zur Gegenwart (1884-1910)*, Berlin, 1910, p. 303.
 - 23 Even so, credit sales played a big role in the south as well. As an example, District Officer Schmidt reported from Keetmanshoop: "It should not be left unmentioned that the merchant Burmeester has, in this month alone, sued 200 to 300 Hottentots for defaulting on their debts. If I were to sustain all these claims by impounding cattle, etc. - and, under a decree issued by the Imperial Chancellor on 27 July 1903, tribal property may not be confiscated in repayment of debts - the outbreak of disturbances would be inevitable." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2084, pp. 51-4, Schmidt to Leurwein, 18 May 1904.
 - 24 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2134, p. 37, Hendrik Witbooi to Leurwein, 3 Nov. 1904, given in Leurwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, *op. cit.*, pp. 457 ff.

- 25 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2135, pp. 14–15, Tecklenburg to the Col. Dept. 3 Jan. 1905.
- 26 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2133, p. 147, Testimony of Nama Gert Anwachab, Hoochanas, 6 Oct. 1904. Cf. also Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2133, Tecklenburg to the Col. Dept., 14 Oct. 1904.
- 27 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2134, pp. 29–33, Leutwein to the Col. Dept., 11 Nov. 1904. Cf. also Burgsdorff-Garath, Alhard von, *Der Hauptmann Henning von Burgsdorff*, Garath, 1947, p. 97, and Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, op. cit., p. 294.
- 28 Leutwein said on this point: "It is yet further proof of the eminent resourcefulness of the natives that all Witbooi fugitives have managed to reach Gibeon unmolested and to report to their kaptein there after slipping through the German lines, crossing insurgent Hereroland and outwitting all police stations notified of their presence. This they achieved although they were unable to provide themselves with food, which fact did not keep them from spending several weeks in the bush." Leutwein, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, op. cit., p. 456.
- 29 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2134, pp. 29–33, Leutwein to the Col. Dept., 11 Nov. 1904. Cf. also a report from the commandant of Omaruru, Lieutenant Plewzke, 3 Oct. 1904: "Between Karibib and Omaruru the men belonging to my battery had to cut grass for the horses. The Witboois expressly refused to perform such a service, observing that they were Witboois, not prisoners." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2134, p. 52.
- 30 Cf. Loth, Heinrich, *Die Ketzerbewegung in Südwestafrika, ihre Vorgeschichte und ihre Grenzen im Freiheitskrieg 1904–1906*, in *WZ*, Leipzig, Vol. 9, 1959–60, pp. 401 ff.
- 31 For details about the "Ethiopian movement" cf. Merenky, A., 'Die äthiopische Bewegung unter den eingeborenen Christen Südwestafrikas', in *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Kolonialkongresses 1905 zu Berlin*, Berlin, 1906; Bechler, Th., *Unabhängigkeitsbewegungen der Farbigen in Südafrika*, Basel 1903 = *Baseler Missions-Studien*, No. 18; Axenfeld, Karl, *Der Äthiopismus in Südafrika*, Berlin, 1907; 'Äthiopische Bewegung', in: *Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon*, Vol. 1, p. 93; Schütze, W., 'Farbe gegen Weiss in Afrika', in *ZKKK*, Vol. 8 1906, pp. 727 ff.
- 32 Cf. Schlosser, Katesa, *Eingeborenkirchen in Süd- und Südwestafrika, ihre Geschichte und Sozialstruktur*, Kiel, 1958, pp. 110 ff.
- 33 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2135, pp. 16–18, Missionary C. Wandres to the Imperial Administration in Windhoek, 31 Dec. 1904.
- 34 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2133, p. 132, Leutwein to the Imperial Chancellor, 10 Nov. 1904. Cf. also Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2134, pp. 29–33, Leutwein to the Col. Dept. 11 Nov. 1904.
- 35 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1220, pp. 28–35, Tecklenburg to the Col. Dept., 17 July 1905.
- 36 Cf. Leutwein, Theodor, *Elf Jahre Gouverneur*, op. cit., p. 458. As regards the differences between Paul Frederiks and Cornelius, cf. *ibid.*, p. 295. Cornelius, a nephew of the Bethanie kaptein, was also a son-in-law of Hendrik Witbooi. During the Herero uprising Cornelius fought on the German side as leader of a Bethanie contingent. After the fighting in the Waterberg he reported sick and returned to Bethanie (cf. *ibid.*, p. 317). Subsequently he became, like Morenga, a redoubtable guerilla leader of the Nama.
- 37 Cf. DKZ, Vol. 22, 1905, pp. 74 ff. In all likelihood, the kaptains of the Zwartboois and Topnaars were murdered while held captive by the Germans. In any case, von Trotha reported laconically on 6 July 1905 that the kaptains Lazarus Zwartbooi and Jan Uichamab "died of natural causes while awaiting trial on charges of high treason, murder and incitement to murder." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2136, p. 13, Trotha to the General Staff in Berlin, 6 July 1905.

- 38 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2133, p. 173-4, Report of Sergeant Beck, 12 Oct. 1904.
- 39 Hintrager, Oskar, *Südwestafrika in der deutschen Zeit*, Munich, 1955, p. 68.
- 40 Cf. DKZ, Vol. 23, 1906, p. 155. This account was given by C. Wandres, a missionary notorious for his extremist views.
- 41 Cf. *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 13.
- 42 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2133, pp. 178-80, private letter of the missionary Berger to his parents, 12 Dec. 1904.
- 43 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2134, p. 44, missionary Spellmeyer to the Rhenish Missionary Society, n. d.
- 44 Cf. Bayer, M., *Mit dem Hauptquartier in Südwestafrika*, 2nd edition, Leipzig, 1909, p. 214, where an exact description of the disarming of the Witboois can be found. The army chaplain, Max Schmidt, noted that the Witboois were disarmed "by a particularly clever ruse". Cf. Schmidt, Max, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
- 45 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, p. 5, Tecklenburg to the Ger. For. Off., 21 Oct. 1904.
- 46 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, p. 13, Col. Dept. to the Administration in Windhoek, 20 Jan. 1905. The official records provide no clue as to the composition of the 119 Nama, the Witbooi contingent proper consisting of only 80-odd people in the end. Incidentally, the Woermann Line charged 16,065 Marks (a princely sum at that time) for shipping the 119 Nama from South West Africa to Togo.
- 47 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, p. 20, Schlettwein (Lomé district office) to the Ger. For. Off., 27 June 1905.
- 48 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, p. 22, Tecklenburg to the Col. Dept., 4 July 1905.
- 49 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, p. 28, Station Chief Preil to the Ger. For. Off., 15 July 1905.
- 50 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, p. 34, Trotha to the Col. Dept., 24 July 1905.
- 51 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, pp. 45-6, Putkamer (Governor of the Cameroons) to the Col. Dept., 23. Sept. 1905.
- 52 The gardener Deistel, to whom the 34 Nama had been assigned for work, reported: "It is hardly conceivable at present that the Witbooi people should be capable of performing any kind of work, considering their miserable condition . . . They are all severe and chronic cases of malaria. They have attacks of shivering at work and are so weak that they have difficulty keeping on their feet. At first, I thought they were feigning illness but on closer observation it turned out that they were ill, severely ill." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, pp. 49-50, Report of the gardener Deistel, 6 Oct. 1905.
- 53 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, p. 54, Putkamer to the Col. Dept., 23 Nov. 1905.
- 54 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2134, pp. 101-3, Stuebel to Bülow, 4 Jan. 1905.
- 55 Bayer, M., *Mit dem Hauptquartier in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, p. 237.
- 56 Cf. the German list of engagements with the Nama, in *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 340 ff.
- 57 Cf. DKZ, Vol. 22, 1905, p. 11; Bayer, M., *Mit dem Hauptquartier in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, p. 225; Schwabe, Kurd, *Im deutschen Diamantenlande*, *op. cit.*, pp. 305 ff. Characteristically, this fact is suppressed in the study of the General Staff.
- 58 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2118, pp. 179-82, Streitwolf's report on a journey to the British Lake Ngami district, 24 Aug. 1905.
- 59 For details about Andreas cf. *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 162 ff. and 221 ff.
- 60 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2134, pp. 101-3, Stuebel to Bülow, 4 Jan. 1905.
- 61 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2135, p. 135, Bernstorff (London) to Bülow, 19 May 1905. A

- similar reaction was reported in Cape Colony by von Jacobs, the German interim Consul-General in Cape Town. Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2135, p. 131, Jacobs to the Ger. For. Off., 19 May 1905. The Reich Chancellor was rather incensed by the proclamation and urged von Trotha by cable "to institute whatever measures are required to preclude any undesirable consequences your proclamation might have." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2135, p. 133, Bülow to Trotha, 21 May 1905.
- 62 *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 107.
- 63 Cf. Deimling, B. von, op. cit., pp. 89 ff.
- 64 *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 89.
- 65 Cf. *Vorwärts*, No. 177, 1 Aug. 1905.
- 66 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2136, pp. 122-4, Tecklenburg to the Col. Dept., 22 Aug. 1905.
- 67 Dr. Hartmann, the erstwhile representative of the big British land companies in South West Africa, was by now holding a senior post in the Gibeon Schürf- und Handelsgesellschaft after serving for a brief period in the Colonial Department.
- 68 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1680, p. 50, Hartmann to B. von Hermann, 16 Aug. 1905.
- 69 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2136, pp. 26-8, Trotha to the General Staff in Berlin, 24 July 1905.
- 70 Trotha speculated that the emissary would be hanged by Hendrik Witbooi, which speaks volumes for the general's mentality. Cf. Schmidt, K. A., 'Hendrik Witboois letzter Aufstand und Tod', in *Deutsche Rundschau*, Vol. 240, Leipzig, 1934, p. 53. Informed by Leutwein on 9 Nov. 1904 that a letter from Hendrik Witbooi was on its way to him, von Trotha observed: "It is to be hoped that the carrier will be hanged." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2089, p. 91, Leutwein to Trotha, 9 Nov. 1904. Here we have additional evidence that in the methods employed von Trotha and the Nama kaptein were poles apart.
- 71 Schmidt, K. A., op. cit., pp. 54 ff.
- 72 *Ibid.*, p. 56.
- 73 To conceal the failure of von Trotha's strategy from the public, the General was decorated with the order *Pour le mérite* and Bülow sang his praises in the Reichstag on 9 Dec. 1905. Cf. *Vorwärts*, No. 294, 16 Dec. 1905.
- 74 "Samuel Isaak is holding out the prospect of the submission of all Witboois (?). I will accept provided they meet the stiff terms I am going to propose, which is doubtful, however." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2137, p. 76; Lindequist to the Imperial Chancellor, 22. Nov. 1905.
- 75 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2137, p. 90, Lindequist to the Ger. For. Off., 1 Dec. 1905.
- 76 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2137, p. 93, Lindequist to the Ger. For. Off., 5 Dec. 1905.
- 77 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2137, pp. 100-2, Dame to the General Staff in Berlin, 8 Dec. 1905.
- 78 Cf. Schlosser, Katesa, *Engelborenenkirchen*, op. cit., pp. 107 ff.
- 79 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2137, p. 140, Lindequist to the Ger. For. Off., 7 Dec. 1905.
- 80 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2138, p. 66, Lindequist to the Ger. For. Off., 3 March 1906.
- 81 Cf. *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 229.
- 82 Bayes, M., *Mit dem Hauptquartier in Südwestafrika*, op. cit., p. 235.
- 83 *Ibid.*, p. 236.
- 84 Cf. e.g. *Cape Argus*, 25 and 28 Sept. 1905. The official files show that the German interim Consul-General in Cape Town invited German residents of that city to send letters of protest to newspapers featuring such stories. Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2137, pp. 4-6, Jacobs to Bülow, 4 Oct. 1905.

- 85 *South African News*, 30 July 1906. The German Consul-General in Cape Town, Humboldt, ordered an investigation to establish the identity of the writer of these lines. It turned out that the culprit was a citizen of the Reich by the name of Richard Denker. The Consul-General had Denker lured to South West Africa, where he was arrested at once. In South West Africa Denker was forced to recant and he was sentenced to five years in prison.
- 86 Cf. *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 251 ff. Incidentally, the Colonial Department took advantage of the breakdown of German supplies in Namaland to secure the Reichstag's consent to the construction of a railway from Lüderitz Bay to Kubub, one of von Trotha's cherished projects. Cf. Deimling, B. von, *op. cit.*, pp. 104 ff. When the question of extending the railway line to Keetmanshoop came up for debate in the Reichstag, Deimling created a scandal by asking in a provocative manner whether he would have to produce the dead bodies of a few starved men first before the bill would go through. Thereupon the project was rejected for the time being. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 107 ff.
- 87 While Lindequist said in a telegram that Morenga was encamped 20 kilometres inside the border, the German consul-general in Cape Town reported that the fighting had taken place 5 miles or 7.5 kilometres inside British territory.
- 88 Cf. *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 281.
- 89 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2093, pp. 110-1, Lindequist to the Ger. For. Off., 7 May 1906.
- 90 *Ibid.*
- 91 Cf. Imp. Off. File No. 2093, p. 117, Ger. For. Office to the German Ambassador in London and to the Consul-General in Cape Town, 9 May 1906. The General Staff was steering a middle course on the border violation: "While fully acknowledging the successes won by your forces we advise you to avoid renewed border violations for political and supply reasons." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2093, p. 129, General Staff to High Command in South West Africa, 10 May 1906.
- 92 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2093, p. 124, Humboldt to the Ger. For. Off., 10 May 1906. The German press tended to play down the border infringement. It referred to a multitude of similar violations by British and French troops to underline that border violations committed by imperialists towards Africans are the rule rather than the exception. Cf. e.g. *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten*, No. 134, 16 May 1906.
- 93 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2094, p. 31, Lindequist to the Ger. For. Off., 26 May 1906.
- 94 Their names were: Petrus Morenga, Adam Witbooi, Christian Witbooi, Andries Isaak, Andries Blaauw, Abraham Rolfs and Samuel Kysten.
- 95 *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 282.
- 96 Deimling, B. von, *op. cit.*, p. 111.
- 97 Cf. *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 290 ff., and Deimling, B. von, *op. cit.*, pp. 116 ff. Deimling also began to reduce the German military force, which had reached a peak of about 15,000 men at the height of the fighting. In the latter half of 1906 alone he sent back 5,000 men. By March 1907 the force was down to 7,400 men.
- 98 *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 294.
- 99 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2139, p. 167, Deimling to the General Staff, 25 Jan. 1907.
- 100 The two are confounded in Deimling, B. von, *op. cit.*, p. 119.
- 101 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 113, Hintrager to the Col. Dept., 8 May 1907.

- 102 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, pp. 114-5, Peace negotiations between the German Government and Cornelius Stürmann, Lifdood, 21 Nov. 1908.
- 103 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2139, p. 150, Deimling to the General Staff, 9 Jan. 1907, Cf. also *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 295, and Deimling, B. von, op. cit., pp. 120 ff.
- 104 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2139, pp. 142-3, Hintrager to Lindequist, 2 Jan. 1907.
- 105 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2139, pp. 119-20, Deimling to Lindequist, 2 Jan. 1907.
- 106 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2139, p. 123, Lindequist to the Commandant of Keetmanshoop, 5 Jan. 1907.
- 107 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2139, pp. 163-4, Lindequist's opinion on the agreement with the Bondelawarts, n.d.
- 108 *Ibid.* Golinelli went so far as to declare that after so many millions had been spent to put down the rebellion there was no room for "deals". He concluded: "The right policy in such a case is not to make a deal, but to dictate the terms." What Golinelli failed to see was that if the military had been in a position to dictate the terms, they would not have sought a "deal" in the first place.
- 109 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2139, pp. 174-5, Dernburg to the Imperial Chancellor, 1 Feb. 1907.
- 110 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 39, Bulow to Dernburg, 15 Feb. 1907.
- 111 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 57, Captain Fenn to Humboldt, 2 Feb. 1907 (in English).
- 112 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 96, Estorff to Protective Force Command, Berlin, 5 May 1907.
- 113 Cf. *Die Kämpfe der deutschen Truppen in Südwestafrika*, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 296.
- 114 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 45, Deimling to the General Staff, 21 Feb. 1907.
- 115 Cf. *The Owl*, 10 Feb. 1905. Christiaan De Wet, commander of the forces of the Orange Free State in the Boer War, became known for his successful use of guerrilla tactics against the British.
- 116 Cf. *Cape Times*, 29 May 1906.
- 117 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2139, p. 114, Deimling to Dernburg, 29 Dec. 1906.
- 118 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2139, p. 115, Metternich to the Ger. For. Off., 1 Jan. 1907.
- 119 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2145, p. 27, Stumm to the Ger. For. Off., 16 Aug. 1907.
- 120 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2145, p. 146, Schuckmann to the Imp. Col. Off., 2 Sept. 1907.
- 121 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2145, pp. 157-8, Schuckmann to the Imp. Col. Off., 27 Sept. 1907.
- 122 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2145, p. 86, Imp. Col. Off. to Wilhelm II, 26 Aug. 1907.
- 123 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2145, p. 96, Schuckmann to the Imp. Col. Off., 5 Sept. 1907.
- 124 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2145, p. 53, Wilhelm II to Lindequist, 16 Aug. 1907.
- 125 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2145, pp. 79-80, Draft of a memorandum to be put by the Imperial Chancellor before Wilhelm II, 27 Aug. 1907.
- 126 Division M stands for Military Administration.
- 127 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2145, pp. 81-2, Opinion of Division M (signed by Maercker) on a draft of the Imp. Col. Off., 27 Aug. 1907.
- 128 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2145, p. 142, Commander to Protective Force Command, Berlin, 23 Sept. 1907.
- 129 Lenin, V. I., *Hefte zum Imperialismus*, Berlin, 1957, p. 674.
- 130 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2145, p. 132, Schuckmann to the Imp. Col. Off., 23 Sept. 1907.

- 131 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2145, p. 143, Ger. For. Off. to the Imp. Col. Off., 28 Sept. 1907.
- 132 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2146, p. 6, Lindequist to von der Busche, 8 Nov. 1907. This statement was so embarrassing that it was kept in a sealed envelope among the files of the Imp. Col. Off., even though these were accessible only to a handful of civil servants.
- 133 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2145, pp. 157-8, Schuckmann to the Imp. Col. Off., 27 Sept. 1907.
- 134 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 45, Deimling to the General Staff, 21 Feb. 1907.
- 135 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 96, Estorff to Protective Force Command, Berlin, 5 May 1907.
- 136 Lord Selborne, High Commissioner for South Africa, told Dernburg in July 1908 that a Cape police officer had warned Simon Kopper in 1906 not to cross the border. Kopper had said in reply that "he and his ancestors had always looked upon the area in question as their property and frequently moved from one place to another, but then the Europeans had come and drawn a line on the map which he did not know and which meant nothing to him." In fact, the British misgivings were unfounded from 1907 onwards because, after the official declaration of the German Government on the termination of the state of war in South West Africa "there was henceforth no reason why natives should be prevented from freely moving across the border." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, pp. 205-7, Dernburg's notes on a conversation with Lord Selborne in Pietermaritzburg, 19 June 1908.
- 137 Cf. DKBl. Vol. 19, 1908, pp. 468 ff., and Vol. 20, 1909, pp. 27 ff.
- 138 Cf. e.g. Schwabe, Kurd, *Im deutschen Diamantenlande*, *op. cit.*, pp. 352 ff., or Külz, Wilhelm, *Deutsch-Südwestafrika im 25. Jahre deutscher Schutzherrschaft*, 2nd edition, Berlin, 1909, p. 167.
- 139 Cf. Hintrager, Oskar, *op. cit.*, p. 104.
- 140 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, pp. 183-5, Report drawn up by Captain Willeke on 11 June 1908 on the situation in the Kalahari Desert in early April 1908 and further military operations there.
- 141 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 164, the British Ambassador in Berlin to H. E. Herr Stemrich, 15 May 1908 (in English).
- 142 Cf. *ibid.* and Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 165, Imp. Col. Off. to the Governor in Windhoek, 29 May 1908.
- 143 The Col. Dept. of the Ger. For. Off. became the Imperial Colonial Office in May 1907. Its first State Secretary was Bernhard Dernburg.
- 144 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 203, Dernburg's memorandum No. 1 on his first conversation with the Governor, 2 June 1908.
- 145 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, ppp. 205-7, Dernburg's notes on a conversation with Lord Selborne in Pietermaritzburg, 19 June 1908. Why the two colonial officials got on so well with each other is not difficult to understand when one considers Selborne's views about Africans in general and about Simon Kopper in particular. Dernburg quoted him as having said: "Simon Kopper is a savage who does not know the first thing about international law. Moreover, he is a thug who is not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier - to use a classic saying. And that people as valuable and dependable as Herr von Erckert and others should lose their lives because of him is something he would deserve even less." *Ibid.*
- 146 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 165, Imp. Col. Off. to the Governor in Windhoek, 29 May 1908.

- 147 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 175, Schuckmann to the Imp. Col. Off., 6 June 1908.
- 148 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, pp. 180-1, Lindequist to the State Secretary of the Ger. For. Off., 9 June 1908.
- 149 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 193, Schuckmann to the Imp. Col. Off., 9 Oct. 1908.
- 150 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, pp. 197, Dernburg to Schuckmann, 27 Oct. 1908 (strictly confidential).
- 151 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, pp. 198-9, Dernburg to the State Secretary of the Ger. For. Off., 27 Oct. 1908 (strictly confidential). The original figure in the draft was 6, rather than 2 million Marks. It was altered after Division MA 1 added a marginal note which reads: "Cost estimate: Three companies of 120 men each at a per capita expenditure of 5,000 Marks. Total: 1.8 million plus allowance for 0.2 million in extra costs = 2 million. But MA 1 does not wish to imply that the three companies can be dispensed with altogether."
- 152 *Ibid.* 'False construction' here means the only possible interpretation - the correct one.
- 153 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2141, p. 3, note from the British Foreign Office, 10 Feb. 1909.
- 154 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2141, p. 4, Bülow to Dernburg, 20 Feb. 1909. Since the sums to be paid to Simon Kopper were well below the original estimates (2,000, 1,500 or 1,200 Marks), Bülow agreed to finance them from the secret fund of the Ger. For. Off. for the time being. For further developments cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2141, p. 5, Golinelli's memorandum of 23 Feb. 1909.
- 155 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2141, p. 2, Memorandum of Division M, n.d.
- 156 It is well worth mentioning a curious episode connected with Simon Kopper. On 21 March 1910 Hintrager informed the Imp. Col. Off. that the High Command of the "Protective Force" had for the fourth time requested permission for an entire company to be sent to Seatzub to erect tombstones there. Hintrager had decided the matter as follows: "I regret to inform you that I cannot consent to the projected despatch of the 7th company to Seatzub for the purpose of erecting tombstones there. . . . Furthermore, it would be pointless to ask Lord Selborne to allow a whole German company, complete with arms, to ride 100 kilometres deep into British territory." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2141, p. 60, Hintrager to the High Command of the Imperial Protective Force (strictly confidential).
- 157 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2117, p. 139, von Trotha to the General Staff, 10 March 1905. According to this source, the total number of prisoners was 4,093, consisting of 938 men, 1,419 women and 1,576 children. By that time 45 men, 57 women and 64 children had already died of exhaustion.
- 158 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2118, pp. 121-3, von Trotha to the General Staff, 8 June 1905. The 8,040 Herero included 1,853 men.
- 159 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2118, pp. 153-4, Tecklenburg to the Col. Dept., 3 July 1905.
- 160 *Ibid.* Tecklenburg then continued: "Economically speaking, of course, the death of so many natives will signify a loss. However, the robustness of the Herero people is such that the gaps will have been filled before long and the next generation will be weaned on subordination to the white race."
- 161 In a telegram which Lindequist sent to the Wilhelmstrasse, this statement was qualified to the effect that military operations in Hereroland would be discontinued "until further notice." Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2118, p. 184, Lindequist to the Ger. For. Off., 30 Nov. 1905.

- 162 "Most of the Herero men and women who arrived from the bush recently were so emaciated and exhausted that they could not be put to work immediately. As a rule, they remained in the camp for a number of weeks before they became available as labour. All the children there had a bad cough." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2119, p. 41, Lindequist to the Col. Dept, 17 April 1906.
- 163 *Ibid.*
- 164 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2119, p. 44, memorandum of 16 June 1906.
- 165 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2119, p. 46, Lindequist to the Col. Dept., 24 July 1906, published in DKBl, Vol. 17, 1906, p. 641.
- 166 Cf. *Berliner Tageblatt*, No. 75, 11 Feb. 1908.
- 167 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2119, pp. 71-2, Lindequist to the Col. Dept., 23 Aug. 1906.
- 168 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 120, Lindequist to the Imp. Col. Off., 24 Aug. 1907.
- 169 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 127, Schuckmann to the Imp. Col. Off., 25 Sept. 1907.
- 170 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1229, pp. 8-14, Streitwolf's report of 2 Dec. 1907.
- 171 Schütze, W., *op. cit.*, p. 737.
- 172 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, p. 64, Lindequist to the Col. Dept., 10 July 1906.
- 173 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2091, p. 71, Lindequist to the Col. Dept., 23 July 1906.
- 174 For the deportation of 119 Nama to Togo in late 1904, the Woermann Line had charged 135 Marks per capita. This means that the bill for about 1,800 Nama would have come to 243,000 Marks.
- 175 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, p. 72, Col. Dept. to Lindequist, 28 July 1906.
- 176 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 88, Estorff to Protective Force Command in Berlin, 10 April 1907 (to be kept confidential!).
- 177 Cf. Deimling, B. von, *op. cit.*, p. 113. In a memorandum Lindequist made the following comment on the matter: "Although the Witboois and the Bethanie people were tightly guarded by the military in prison camps in the north—to be more precise, in Windhoek—Colonel von Deimling urged that they be deported or taken to Shark Island because he feared they might escape and rejoin the fighting." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2155, p. 137, Lindequist's memorandum of 13 Jan. 1907.
- 178 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, p. 100, Lindequist's memorandum of 12 Dec. 1906.
- 179 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, pp. 17-18, notes of the missionary Laaf, Lüderitz Bay, 20 Dec. 1906.
- 180 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 88, Estorff to Protective Force Command in Berlin, 10 April 1907 (to be kept confidential!).
- 181 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 87, Hintrager to the Ger. For. Off., 10 April 1907.
- 182 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, pp. 109-10, Hintrager to Lindequist, 2 May 1907.
- 183 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 94, Estorff to Protective Force Command in Berlin, 14 April 1907.
- 184 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 111, report of the Lüderitz Bay District to the Administration in Windhoek, 26 April 1907.
- 185 Cf. Hintrager, Oskar, *op. cit.*, p. 96.
- 186 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2139, pp. 129-39, correspondence between the Administration and the Armed Forces Command, 10 Aug. 1906.
- 187 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 161, copy of a report on the mortality in POW camps in German South West Africa drawn up by the High Command of the Protective Force, n.d. The estimate made in the *Report on the Natives of South Africa and their Treat-*

- ment by Germany that approx. 60 per cent of the prisoners of war had died comes fairly close to the real figure. (Cf. *Report*, p. 98).
- 188 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2139, p. 84, Deimling to Dernburg, 9 Dec. 1906.
- 189 The results of the 1911 census can be found neither in the official annual reports nor in other sources. Even the files of the Imp. Col. Off. do not contain any reference. So far they have exclusively been given in the *Report* (Cf. *Report*, p. 35). The best proof of their authenticity is the fact that they are not disputed in the official German side of the story, at least as far as the figures relating to the Herero and Nama are concerned. (Cf. *Die Behandlung der einheimischen Bevölkerung in den kolonialen Besitzungen Deutschlands und Englands*, Berlin, 1919, pp. 33 ff.). In marked contrast, the German study challenges the *Report's* figures concerning the Bergdama. Therefore, we have not relied on the *Report* for our estimates of the Bergdama population. In respect of the figure of 15,130 given for the Herero, it is necessary to make two observations. For one thing, the 1,000 or so Herero who had crossed into British-ruled territory must be added to the figure. For another, some 10,000 Herero had already died during the typhoid epidemic that occurred in 1898. But these facts cannot erase the bloodstained record of German imperialism, or the genocide committed against the Herero people.
- 190 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1219, pp. 23-4, Col. Dept. to the Administration in Windhoek, 9 May 1905.
- 191 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1220, pp. 28-35, Tecklenburg to the Col. Dept., 17 July 1905 [This writer's emphasis - H. D.].
- 192 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1220, p. 147, Lindequist to the Col. Dept, 8 Aug. 1906. In the case of the Herero, only the land was confiscated because they had lost all their cattle already.
- 193 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1220, pp. 131-4, Lindequist to the Col. Dept., 25 April 1906.
- 194 Erzberger, Matthias, 'Der neueste Mißgriff in der Kolonialpolitik', in *Der Tag*, No. 9, 6 Jan. 1906. Two days before, writing anonymously in the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, the mouthpiece of the Centre Party, Erzberger had strongly attacked the Imperial Directive of 26 Dec. 1905.
- 195 Cf. especially Epstein, Klaus, 'Erzberger and the German Colonial Scandals (1905-1910)', in *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 74 1959, pp. 637 ff. Cf. also Epstein, Klaus, *Matthias Erzberger und das Dilemma der deutschen Demokratie*, Berlin/Frankfurt am Main, 1962.
- 196 *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Reichstages, XI. Legislaturperiode, II. Session (1905-06)*, Vol. 3, Berlin, 1906, p. 2246.
- 197 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2085, p. 187, Golinelli's memorandum of 6 April 1908.
- 198 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2085, p. 60, published in DKBl, Vol. 18 (1907), p. 6.
- 199 Cf. Kütz, Wilhelm, *Deutsch-Südafrika*, *op. cit.*, p. 173.
- 200 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1534/3, pp. 164-8, minutes of the 66th meeting of the supervisory council of the Ger. SWA Co., 8 Dec. 1904. As well as engaging in lucrative commercial transactions the Ger. SWA Co. also traded in real estate, selling worthless sandy soil in Swakopmund to developers at extortionate prices. This earned it the nickname of a "sand-selling company."
- 201 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1534/3, pp. 181-5, minutes of the 68th meeting of the supervisory council of the Ger. SWA Co., 7 Dec. 1905.
- 202 Cf. *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Reichstages*, *op. cit.*, p. 2258. Cf. also Heinig, Kurt, *Die Finanzskandale des Kaiserreiches*, Berlin, 1925, pp. 54 ff.

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- 203 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1855, p. 5, Erzberger to Bülow, 2 Aug. 1906. Because of the persistent attacks against him, Woermann was finally deprived of his monopoly in early 1907 with the licensing of Menzell's Hamburg-Bremer-Afrika-Linie. Woermann fought a relentless battle against the rival company, engineering a merger with Ballin's Hamburg-Amerika-Linie for this purpose. To undercut the much lower freight rates charged by Menzell's line, Woermann offered his services at a rate one Mark below Menzell's, whereupon the latter merged with the well-financed Norddeutscher Lloyd.
- 204 Cf. in particular Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2143, pp. 61-5, Humboldt to Bülow, 2 April 1906. In this report Humboldt stated: "I believe this is the first time that a foreign country, and not even a friendly one, has been made the supply base for an entire army."
- 205 Jacobs said on this matter: "With a single exception, cross-border transport has been entrusted to British subjects, all of them followers of Jameson, who are putting pressure on the Prime Minister not to envisage a closing of the border." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2142, pp. 72-3, Jacobs to the Ger. For. Off., 18 Feb. 1905. Elsewhere he noted: "Difficulties are unlikely since permits have been issued to a close friend of Premier Jameson." Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2092, p. 110, Consul-General to Line of Communications Command, 8 April 1905.
- 206 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2092, p. 100, Jacobs to the Imperial Chancellor, 30 Nov. 1904.
- 207 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2118, pp. 161-6, Jacobs to Bülow, 27 July 1905.
- 208 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2094, p. 45, Nettelbladt to Richtofen, 20 Aug. 1905.

The Peace of the Graveyard (1907–15)

The Herero and Nama Become Forced Labourers

The great uprisings of 1904–07 were, arguably, the most cataclysmic events in the history of South West Africa. After the insurgents had been crushed into submission, the exponents of German imperialism were able to note full of satisfaction: "The issue of who will control South West Africa from the Orange to the Kunene has been settled by force of arms."¹ The so-called Protectorate had become an outright German colony² and the Herero and Nama, previously the masters of the country, had been transformed from cattle raisers into penniless proletarians. German imperialism had largely broken the Herero's and Nama's power to resist so that in the remaining years of German colonial rule the peace of the graveyard reigned in the territory.

But plunder and despoilation were still not enough in the eyes of the imperialists. On 18 August 1907 they issued three directives³ permanently barring the indigenous population from owning land and raising cattle. From the age of seven all Africans were required to carry passes. Anyone unable to prove the source of their livelihood was liable to prosecution for "vagrancy". These draconian measures were designed to keep the Africans indefinitely in the state of destitution and rightlessness in which they found themselves in 1907.

The suppression of the great uprisings brought to a close the process of dispossessing the Herero and Nama, an essential prerequisite for reducing them to the status of wage labourers. The forcible nature of their expropriation, however, prevented them from becoming free wage labourers. The Herero or Nama worker was not "free in the double sense, that as a free man he can dispose of his labour-power as his own commodity, and that on the other hand he has no other commodity for sale, is short of everything necessary for the realization of his labour-power."⁴ To be free wage labourers the Herero and Nama would have needed individual liberty. Their status, therefore, was that of forced labourers, differing from that of slaves only in that they were not the property of their masters and so could not be bought or sold. But in some respects forced labourers are even worse off than slaves. While slaves, being the property of their masters, are generally treated well, forced labourers are subjected to all kinds of brutalities. If they become unfit for work or die as a result, their masters will simply ask for

others to replace them. During the remaining years of German colonial domination in South West Africa the status of the Herero and Nama was to remain that of forced labour.

The transformation of the Herero and Nama into forced labour gave rise to far-reaching changes in South West Africa's social structure. The class structure of the two communities was abnormal because, owing to non-economic constraints, there were henceforth only workers, i.e. unskilled labourers. That the Herero and Nama did not constitute an industrial proletariat in the modern sense is self-evident. They were employed exclusively to perform manual labour. But here, especially in the sphere of mining, we find the origins of the proletariat in present-day Namibia. It should also be remembered that apart from the forcibly proletarianized Herero and Nama there were still the Rehoboth tribe, the Bethanie people and the Ovambo, all of whom had not been expropriated. Consequently, one may speak only of the proletarianization of part of the South West African population.

In the aftermath of the savage policy of annihilation pursued by German imperialism, an acute labour shortage began to make itself felt in the colony. Throughout the period from 1907 to 1915, the bosses of the land companies and the farmers were forever complaining about a lack of manpower.

Forming the nucleus of South West Africa's workers were the Herero and Nama who had been driven into forced labour, most of them working on the farms. Dr. Otto Bongard, having accompanied State Secretary Dernburg on a fact-finding tour of the colony in 1908, wrote of them: "The Herero as a member of a pastoral people is ideally suited to farming. Unfortunately, the Herero have been largely wiped out by the war. A high percentage of those who survived are in a deplorable state of health due to the hardships they endured during the war, the terrible ordeal they went through in the sandveld where thousands died of hunger and thirst, and the venereal diseases they contracted in prisoner-of-war camps where infections spread with alarming speed. To cap it all, their cattle herds were destroyed by the war, and the Herero people, accustomed to a diet based on milk, developed scurvy in captivity where they were deprived of their staple food.

"Although it can be assumed that those who survived the war are the most robust of all, the majority of them are beset by disease to such an extent that they cannot be expected to produce healthy offspring. This is especially true of mothers who were young girls when they suffered the trials and tribulations of the sandveld. Add to this that many women are sterile because of venereal disease and that the Herero decided to cut down procreation through abortion lest children be born while they were held in bondage. Consequently, there is little hope in the foreseeable future that the labour reservoir required for the development of the country might be swelled from among the ranks of the Herero and the Hottentots (whose situation is much the same), the less so as there is a pronounced trend to emigrate to British territory."⁵

The Quest for Manpower

The German colonialists hoped to overcome the manpower shortage by recruiting Ovambo tribesmen. Whereas before the uprisings of 1904-07 the German imperialists had without scruple engaged in warmongering against them, it had meanwhile dawned on them that a conflict with the Ovambo must at all costs be avoided to preserve a sorely needed labour reservoir. However, with the Ovambo available only sporadically and temporarily, usually for the duration of a few months, this was little more than a make-shift solution.

Hence the persistent call for foreign migrant labour. As an example, the Otavi-gesellschaft wrote to Dernburg "that in the light of the consistently unfavourable labour situation, notably the decline in the influx of manpower from Ovamboland and the reduced availability of Herero owing to work performed elsewhere in the Protectorate, business can be conducted in an orderly and profitable way only if the manpower deficit is made up by bringing in foreign workers."⁶ The company was chiefly thinking of workers from the Cape Colony of whom over 6,400 were already engaged in South West Africa by early 1911.⁷

The German colonialists were less successful in Angola. In order to secure the consent of the Portuguese authorities to the recruitment of Angolan migrant labourers, the German Minister in Lisbon submitted the following proposal to the German Chancellor, Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg: "It would appear advisable to confer an Imperial distinction on the Portuguese Ministers of Naval and Colonial Affairs and on the Governor-General of Angola once the recruitment drive has got under way and produces tangible results. The Portuguese, being highly susceptible to such honours, the appreciation of the favour they have done us will serve as an incentive to other future business partners."⁸ However, all German hopes for migrant labourers from Angola crumbled to dust when the Portuguese colonial authorities ruled against granting the permission requested.⁹ Entrepreneurs in South West Africa even demanded on more than one occasion that Chinese "coolies" be imported instead, a suggestion that was rejected by the Reich Colonial Office.

Since it had proved impossible to resolve the manpower problem in South West Africa by attracting foreign migrant labour, the German colonialists began to concentrate on opening up what they described as their domestic reserves. What they meant was those Africans who, despite pass laws and compulsory registration, were removed from German influence because they had taken refuge in the more inaccessible parts of the country. It was decided to crack down without mercy on Africans who were "roaming about", thereby escaping exploitation as forced labour. At a farmers' congress held at Grootfontein in August 1909 some of the demands raised were: "An increase in the police force, more sweeping powers to use firearms against natives, transfer of police duties to trustworthy farmers . . . Despite a great number of more radical and drastic proposals, the moderate [*sic*] proposals listed above were adopted almost unanimously."¹⁰

The *Deutsche Kolonial-Zeitung*, a newspaper quoted several times already, called for an even tougher line against Africans trying to avoid the fate of becoming forced labourers: "Only draconian measures will help. Vagrancy must be punished with severity and pockets of cattle thieves [i.e. the places to which these Africans had withdrawn-H. D.] must be destroyed by the police and the military continually staging raids. The Kaffirs in their hide-out in the mountains, the Herero lurking in the bushveld and the Bushmen wandering over the savannah—all of them must not feel secure for a single moment. A very effective way of dealing with them would be to grant police powers along the lines of the Boer field cornet system to reliable farmers in outlying areas so that they might take action against natives who are acting against the law."¹¹

For the indigenous population of South West Africa the period 1907–15 was a time of suffering and misery. Those among them who had managed to escape capture became the target of virtual manhunts. Even the Governor found it necessary after some time to protest against the indiscriminate killing of Africans. He declared, in fact: "If it remains common practice to open fire on every Hottentot who shows up, there will never be peace in the border areas." And commenting on the manhunts mounted against the San, or Bushmen, he observed: "Our armed forces have made various remarkable and commendable forays into the Namib, driving the Bushmen there out of their hiding-places and shooting a couple of them. But I do not believe that the continuation of such hostile patrol operations against the Bushmen holds much promise. Inevitably, the upshot will be that a few people are shot dead and that some others are captured—only to run away as soon as they have been assigned to a farm."¹²

The Use of Flogging

The Africans serving as farm labourers were completely at the mercy of their masters, which meant that they were constantly being subjected to physical maltreatment and acts of cruelty. Often, when a farmer was dissatisfied with an African worker for some reason or another, he would send him to the nearest police station with a written note saying the bearer had been lazy, disobedient or impudent. The police officer would then, within his own discretion, give the delinquent 10 to 15 lashes with the *sjambok*, a heavy rhinoceros hide whip, indicate the punishment administered on the written note, and send the worker back to his master who tended to put him to work again at once as if nothing had happened. While the statistical data available about floggings ordered by the authorities are very sketchy, there is nevertheless sufficient evidence of an enormous increase in the incidence of corporal punishment in the closing stages of German colonial rule. Whereas, according to the available sources, flogging allegedly took place in a mere 187 cases in 1907–05, a much higher figure—1,655—is given for 1911–12.¹³

Even so, most of the white masters did not bother with sending an African worker with whom they were dissatisfied to the nearest police station. Rather, they arrogated to themselves the right to manhandle their African labourers as they pleased, a practice euphemistically called "paternal chastisement". With German colonial domination nearing its end, the vicious beatings assumed such proportions that the Governor, Theodor Seitz, deemed it necessary to sound a note of warning: "Over the past few weeks I have received word from various quarters that in some parts of the country a mood of despair is spreading among the natives. By all accounts, this is because acts of brutality committed by whites against natives have become alarmingly frequent, with police officers also involved in a number of instances, and because the courts fail to punish such wrongdoing in such a way as the natives' sense of justice demands. The reports say that the natives, who have lost all faith in the impartiality of our judges, become consumed with blind hatred of all that is white, ultimately resorting to self-help, i.e. rebellion. It should be patent to everyone that, unless vigorous remedial action is initiated, the pent-up feelings of hatred among the natives will inevitably erupt into a new uprising born of sheer desperation, an event that would spell economic ruin for the country. It is, therefore, in the best interests of the whole white population if those who indulge in an orgy of violence against the natives in the belief that their white skin gives them the right to perpetrate the most revolting crimes are brought to justice."¹⁴

The Governor's appeals to call a halt to the vicious floggings went unheeded. Indeed, the cases in which Africans were beaten to death by their masters on a flimsy pretext or without any reason at all became even more frequent. If those responsible were brought to justice—an exceedingly rare occurrence—they were usually acquitted or got away with derisory fines.¹⁵ A few of the many episodes in which Africans died as a result of the savage treatment meted out to them will be related here.

The Cramer affair is a particularly glaring example. On a routine visit, a police patrol had discovered by chance that virtually all of the farmer Cramer's African workers, men and women alike, were suffering from festering wounds. An investigation limited to the more severe cases revealed that Cramer had whipped two pregnant African women on two successive days with such brutality, using the *sjambok* for that purpose, that they miscarried. Two more women even died as a result of the beatings. Cramer was charged with assault and battery in eight cases (seven of his victims being female) and sentenced to one year and nine months in prison.¹⁶ A court of appeal commuted this judgment to four months in jail plus a fine of 2,700 Marks. In his summing up, the presiding judge said the court considered three months in jail adequate retribution for the maltreatment of an African woman resulting in the victim's death. Such was the value attributed by the German colonialists to the life of an African.

What the Cramer affair also demonstrated was that the German regulations governing the infliction of corporal punishment existed only on paper. As an

example, it was, in theory, forbidden to beat women. And the maximum penalty for men was 50 lashes, to be administered in two doses at an interval of 14 days. However, the Cramer case made it plain that the white masters of the country were quite unwilling to accept any legal restrictions on the treatment of their labourers! Cramer's victims were mostly women. In order to demonstrate his "tried and tested" methods of dealing with the indigenous people he did, in fact, twice flog one of his African women labourers with impunity before the very eyes of the police. In practice, the number of lashes given was unlimited, in Cramer's case restricted only by the waning of his own strength. For example, he whipped an African man named July "for a whole afternoon" and an African woman called Maria "for a whole evening". In Maria's case he resumed the flogging the next day. When his victim, described as a tall and strong woman, had to be taken to hospital one week later, she could barely stand on her feet, having developed high fever. After six weeks she died from the injuries she had received.

A special characteristic of the forced labour system was that the police unhesitatingly provided "replacements" for workers who had been killed or incapacitated. As for Cramer, he waited a mere three days before he administered his first beating to two women sent as "replacements". One of them, a frail woman in her late fifties, died as a result two weeks later. As was subsequently established by a court, Cramer was in the habit of maltreating his servants without any reason.¹⁷

The Cramer affair was by no means an isolated case. In another episode, one Walter Boehmer was fined 1,000 Marks in Windhoek on 1 May 1914 for having beaten to death one of his African workers. Not only on the farms, but also in the diamond fields, Africans were subjected to physical maltreatment in various forms. Since most of them were Ovambo who had gone there as migrant labour of their own free will, the authorities found it necessary to take action against the most flagrant abuses. Between early April and early June 1911 fifteen such cases were handled in court, but once again the penalties imposed were extremely mild. In point of fact, most cases of ill-treatment were not brought to the notice of the authorities because the majority of Africans affected did not dare to lay charges against their tormentors. They knew full well that this would have been of little avail since the courts tended to rule against them.

Occasionally, however, disputes among the white masters themselves brought things to light which otherwise would not have come to public notice. As an example, the general manager of the Otavi railway, apparently at loggerheads with the local police, complained in January 1909 that a police sergeant had severely manhandled an African. Playing down the incident, an official report stated that "a police sergeant in Onguati, while pursuing a native who had refused to stop when challenged, imprudently ordered the natives of the *werf* where the fugitive had sought refuge to come out, maltreating some of them in the process."¹⁸

The charge made by the Otavi railway manager that the police sergeant "then kicked several men and women with his spurs" was flatly denied by district officer Wehle in Karibib who said only one woman had testified that "she had been

injured when kicked with spurs whereas no one else had made any such allegation."¹⁹ Yet there can be hardly any doubt that the only reason why the other Africans did not confirm the statements made to the police was their fear of reprisals.

Following this, the authorities turned the tables on the Otavi railway manager, declaring that he "does not want others to form a judgement of the treatment given the native workers [on the Otavi line-H. D.]. During the rainy season breaches in the embankment are an almost daily occurrence. The natives are then often forced to work through the night so that it is doubtful whether they always get enough rest during the day."²⁰

German Apprehensions about Resistance

Even at this time of ferocious oppression and untold suffering, there were still signs of resistance against German imperialism. Indeed, the outrages committed against the people of South West Africa galvanized them into spontaneous resistance. What all their actions had in common, however, was that they were isolated, and restricted to only a few of their number. After the battles of 1904-07 the Herero and Nama were in no condition to undertake any major coordinated operations. What the occasional flare-up of resistance achieved all the same was that the colonial rulers never lost the feeling of sitting on top of a volcano.

Even within months of the official termination of the state of war, Friedrich von Lindequist informed the Reich Colonial Office that signs of unrest had again been noted among the Herero. He surmised that the Herero might be planning to evade forced labour by crossing into British territory.²¹ The missionaries took the view that an exodus of the Herero could only be prevented from doing so by allowing their Supreme Chief, Samuel Maharero, to return to South West Africa. Quite apart from the fact that Samuel had no intention of going back as long as the land of his birth was under German sway, Governor Bruno von Schuckmann tried to stifle the debate on the possibility of Samuel's return by making the following statement: "I feel that, after all that has happened, we cannot afford to thrust ourselves upon Samuel, at least not in the foreseeable future. He may well be allowed to come back in a few years' time when things have calmed down. For the time being, we ought not to make any political experiments that might backfire. If Samuel really wants to come, he should ask for permission. He may do so by approaching the representative of the Rhenish Mission in Johannesburg. Should Samuel request permission to return, it will be up to us to dictate the terms; if we are the first to move, he will be in a stronger position. Nor do I believe that the situation on the labour market would change as a result. The workers tend to go where they are offered the highest pay or the best conditions . . . Samuel must not be allowed to come back now because this would promptly provoke unrest—not war, but strong feelings."²² Despite the Governor's intervention, the debate on whether Samuel should return continued.²³

While official reports of the colonial authorities described the situation in Hereroland as disquieting, the situation in Namaland—especially in the south—was much more critical. There it was primarily the Bondelswarts who gave their colonial masters cause for concern. In fact, Governor Schuckmann told the Reich Colonial Office that seven Bondelswarts led by Wilhelm Ortmann had crossed the Orange in late January 1908 to escape German colonial domination. It would appear at first sight that the defection of seven Bondelswarts should not have been taken seriously by the colonial authorities. But this was not so. There was nothing the authorities dreaded more than a precedent which other Africans would then take as an example to follow. Given the acute shortage of manpower in South West Africa, it was vital for the Germans to prevent an exodus of the Herero and Nama at all costs. Yet this was impossible to accomplish without the cooperation of the Cape Colony authorities.

The German Governor, therefore, immediately got in touch with the Cape Government to demand the extradition of the seven Bondelswarts. In a report to the Reich Colonial Office, Schuckmann said: "A cooperative attitude on the part of the Cape Government and the expulsion of the fugitives to the north will certainly have a deterrent effect on the other Bondels. Consequently, their extradition would be most desirable."²⁴

The Cape Colony authorities, who had worked hand in glove with the German imperialists during the great uprising in South West Africa, continued their collaboration in the period that followed. Dernburg reported that both the Premier of the Cape Colony and the High Commissioner for South Africa "had urgently requested (him) to bring about cooperation between British and German authorities in the interests of universal security . . . They argued that, only if the two nations worked closely together and informed each other sufficiently early, would it be possible for them to maintain law and order among the unruly border population who were equally troublesome to both sides."²⁵

In line with this policy of imperialist cooperation, the Cape authorities agreed to extradite the seven Bondelswarts. This sent the German press into raptures, with the semi-official *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* commenting: "The verbal agreement in the summer of this year between the British High Commission and the Cape Government on the one hand and the Imperial Colonial Office on the other to afford mutual assistance in suppressing rebellious elements along the border of the Protectorate of South West Africa is beginning to bear fruit."²⁶

But it was not only a question of individual attempts to emigrate. In December 1908 a Nama unit was established under the command of Abraham Rolf, one of Morenga's lieutenants, to resume the struggle against German imperialism. It was almost entirely made up of Bondelswarts who had escaped from the locations or fled while on their way to new work sites. Abraham Rolf's force raided numerous farms in December 1908 to provide themselves with the weapons and equipment they needed. The successful raids mounted by these Bondelswarts struck terror into the hearts of the German settlers in the southern part of Namaland.

In early 1909, faced with overwhelming German superiority, the unit commanded by Abraham Rolf withdrew to British-ruled territory. On crossing the border they told a British police officer that "they would surrender to the Cape Government if they were given assurances that they would not be extradited. Otherwise they would fight to the last."²⁷ Following this, the German Consul-General in Cape Town asked for instructions from the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin. Dernburg's answer showed to what extent the raids staged by this small Nama force had upset the German imperialists. He issued the following directive: "Provided that the Hottentots who have crossed the border near Rietfontein are disarmed, I have no objections—in the light of the situation now obtaining—to the Cape Government giving an unconditional pledge of non-extradition on the understanding that the rebels are immediately settled and permanently interned at a site distant from our border."²⁸ As it turned out, Dernburg's concession had not been necessary, as the Cape authorities did not feel bound to respect the assurances given by some police officer. In their eyes, imperialist class solidarity took precedence over the fate of a handful of Africans.

This they had demonstrated already towards the end of 1908 when the Cape police shot a Bondelswart, by the name of Klein-Jakobus, who had escaped from the location to which he had been confined in order to seek refuge on British territory. The Governor's deputy, Oskar Hintrager, gave the following account of Klein-Jakobus's end in a message to the Imperial Colonial Office: "I am pleased to inform you on this occasion that the Cape police have yet again displayed a degree of mobility that reflects the greatest credit on them. A couple of days ago they disposed of Klein-Jakobus, a dangerous fugitive from the Bondelswart reserve, in much the same way as Morenga one year before. After we had filed an application for Klein-Jakobus's extradition . . . the Cape Government instructed the magistrate in Springbokfontein to take Klein-Jakobus into custody. Thereupon the magistrate sent out police patrols to capture the fugitive who had fled into the Orange Mountains near Violsdrift. According to a telegram received from Cape Town today, these patrols shot Klein-Jakobus Christian while he was attempting to escape. Thus, another dangerous enemy has been eliminated."²⁹

The Nama who had crossed into British territory under the leadership of Abraham Rolf at the beginning of January 1909 were turned over to the Germans in the middle of that year. Of the ten Nama, six were sentenced to death while four were condemned to life imprisonment and ordered to be kept in chains. To add to the deterrent effect, each of the condemned was given 100 lashes with the whip into the bargain.³⁰ However, the four Nama who had been given life sentences managed to escape from the jail in Karibib only a few months later. The extradition and condemnation of Abraham Rolf and his men must have given great delight to Hintrager, for he wrote a full fifty years later: "The execution of the death sentences at Keetmanshoop made a deep impression on the natives. The extradition proceedings had brought home to them that there was no sanctuary for them any longer on the other side of the border."³¹

As can be seen from Hintrager's official reports, the German rulers of the colony were rather worried about the situation in Southern Namaland in the closing months of 1908. In particular, Hintrager expressed misgivings over the Berseba people and the Bondelswarts. He noted a rising tide of discontent among the Berseba community, and there were persistent rumours that disturbances would erupt shortly: "The reason was that they were harried by creditors who had brought actions against them to enforce repayment of their debts. Under these circumstances, the Governor did not leave for Berlin before the district officer of Keetmanshoop had given him assurances that the situation did not hold any imminent dangers.

"The Bondels require almost the same measure of caution as the Berseba people. It is pointless to argue about whether they should be trusted or not. I am only mentioning the facts: they have never been defeated, they run away whenever they like, and they are hatching plots against us with the ragtag and bobtail on the other side of the border, witness the operations of Klein-Jakobus Christian."

Hintrager's conclusion was: "The Bondels and the Berseba tribe are the two powder kegs of the south. We must see to it that they do not explode, for the slightest spark may set them off. Any such gangs will therefore have to be destroyed root and branch."³²

Hintrager's Resettlement Plans

One week later Hintrager apprised the Reich Colonial Office of his plans to remove the "Bondelswarts threat": "As long as the Bondelswarts remain in their locations, things will not settle down in the south. Hence I share the view that they ought to be moved elsewhere. But I deem it advisable to wait until the railway line to Kalkfontein has been completed. Without this line it would be too risky an undertaking. The resettlement of the Bondel tribe cannot be compared to the transfer of the Khauas and Zwartbooi Hottentots to Windhoek. The Khauas and Zwartbooi lay defeated and prostrate, their kapteins dead or captive, so they did not dare to reject our terms or to escape. The Bondels, by contrast, are undefeated and aware that treaties with the German Government can be broken with impunity. They will not so easily resign themselves to the fate in store for them."³³

In another report, Hintrager set out his resettlement plans in greater detail: "As far as I know the natives here, it would be a mistake to assume that the Bondels now confined to locations, or any other natives for that matter, are satisfied with the turn things have taken in the aftermath of the war. This can, in effect, not be otherwise because since their rebellion the one-time masters of the country have been relegated to the status of people bound to respect the supremacy and laws of the white man and compelled to work if they want to live . . . We cannot change the present generation in a matter of years, so they will try again and again to cast off the yoke we must impose on them if German South West Africa is to be a

German colony for whites . . . My view is that in the interests of the Reich and of the Protectorate we must not indulge in bleeding-heart liberalism, but practise *realpolitik*, above all against the Bondelswart locations, that perpetual source of danger, before it is too late as we may then well find to our cost. We would not be the ones who are breaking the peace, as the Bondels have done this already on more than one occasion . . . If the kaptein and his headmen are powerless to prevent their subjects from escaping and marauding, we must do something about it rather than sit back with our arms folded until no one else but the shadow kaptein Johannes Christian and a scattering of decrepit or cowardly headmen remain in the locations, a point I have repeatedly made before.

"The pledges of fealty made by the Hottentots still living in the locations cannot be taken seriously. They will remain loyal only until such time as they believe the moment has come to defect and take up arms. Therefore, I feel that the Bondels now in locations must be deported to Grootfontein in the north where they will constitute no threat. This should be done by force, and the sooner the better. It may well turn out a difficult task involving bloodshed, but such an eventuality is preferable to the current state of uncertainty. The experience gained during the last great rebellion has shown the usefulness of the transfer of the Khauas Hottentots and Zwartboois to Windhoek in 1896 and 1898, respectively. Along with some others they were among the few who kept out of the war. Once a native has been transplanted to some other area, he will no longer be a threat to peace, but learn to work and obey orders. What I have said of the natives near Warmbad is also true of the Stürmann people in Spitzkop, only that they may well be even more unreliable. *All Hottentots in the south* must be removed to the north as soon as there are signs that they cannot be trusted and *Herero must be transplanted to the south instead* . . .

"In conclusion, I must sound a note of warning over plans to reduce the Protective Force still further and, even more important, the police force. Rather, the latter will have to be reinforced."³⁴

As emerges from Hintrager's report, the German imperialists wanted to go even further than dispossessing the Herero and Nama and pressing them into service as forced labour. In an attempt to extinguish the last spark of resistance, the southern Nama tribes were to be forcibly resettled in the north and the Herero in the south. Since the German colonial rulers considered the Bondelswarts too numerous for such an experiment,³⁵ they decided to deport comparatively small groups for a start: the so-called Stürmann Nama and the Veldschoendragers. The Stürmann Nama numbered 80 (22 men, 28 women and 30 children) and the Veldschoendragers 44 (including 20 men). Both groups were accused of having evaded their duty to perform forced labour. Governor Bruno von Schuckmann gave the following account of the enforced resettlement of these Nama in February 1909: "The Stürmann location was surrounded by troops on 17 February of this year, and all natives found on the *werf* were arrested and, after their ringleaders had been

punished, transferred to the northern district of Grootfontein. Although they were kept under close surveillance there, they soon made an attempt to escape, which was thwarted only by pure chance. The primitive conditions obtaining in Grootfontein make it necessary for them to be tightly guarded all the time. Yet such a measure would be costly as a disproportionate number of personnel would be required, still without being able to prevent individual natives from getting away." He added that the Veldschoendragers, too, had "made a renewed attempt to escape in January of this year, having contrived to break the chains put on their feet."³⁶

So the forcible deportation proved a fiasco even in its early stages. Moreover, in the words of their colonial masters, the two Nama groups were „likely to foment unrest among natives who had thus far kept the peace." In what had become a fairly intractable situation, the Governor demanded, in spite of the general shortage of labour, that "in the interests of security" the two Nama groups be deported to the Cameroons, Togo or East Africa.

The Governor's demand did not arouse much enthusiasm at the Imperial Colonial Office. After some hesitation Lindequist proposed that the Nama be shipped to East Africa.³⁷ Yet the German Governor there, Baron Albrecht von Rechenberg, made an urgent plea to refrain from such a step "which would put at risk the security of German East Africa." After this *démarche*, the deportation plans went into abeyance for about a year.

However, the Colonial Administration in Windhoek was in no mood to let matters rest there. In March 1910 Hintrager renewed his demand: "I urgently reiterate my previous request that the Hottentots interned at Grootfontein be deported to another protectorate."³⁸ Having been constantly bombarded with such requests, the Reich Colonial Office ultimately ordered the Nama to be transported to the Cameroons. For 93 Nama (26 men, 40 women and 27 children) there now began an ordeal as agonizing in every detail as that which the Witboois had gone through in the same colony six years previously.

Within a few months of their deportation, the Governor of the Cameroons reported that 11 of the Nama had died while over 40 were in hospital. He urged that the survivors be promptly sent back to South West Africa. But this demand was strenuously opposed by the authorities in Windhoek. Meanwhile, the Nama were carried off by disease one by one. In October 1911 the Colonial Administration in Duala drew attention to the fact that "in the opinion of the chief medical officer the rest [of the Nama-H. D.] are in such poor health that if they stay here much longer only a tiny minority of the deportees will still be alive in one or two years' time. Since, on the one hand, the return of these ailing people, mostly women and children, can hardly be considered a threat to public peace, while, on the other hand, the continued stay of these Hottentots in Djang will raise the spectre of an epidemic, I beg Your Excellency to agree to the return of the surviving Hottentots with the authorities in South West Africa defraying the cost."³⁹

But Hintrager remained unmoved: "I cannot comply with this request because these Hottentots, in particular, were a constant source of trouble among the indige-

nous population here in the south. To ship them back here would be irresponsible. I deem it wiser to remove them to some other place in the Cameroon where climatic conditions are better rather than to neglect the security interests of thousands of whites in the Protectorate here out of humanitarian considerations for a mere handful of people."⁴⁰

By August 1912 no more than 37 out of 93 deportees were still alive. When the matter was finally raised in the Reichstag, which adopted a resolution calling on the Reich Chancellor to order the surviving Nama to be transported back to South West Africa, the Imperial Colonial Office, in a directive issued in March 1913, at long last ordered the Governor in Windhoek to ensure their repatriation. Thus ended three years of suffering which only one-third of the deportees had survived.

A strike staged by the railway construction workers near Wilhelmsthal in September and October 1910 was arguably the most important manifestation of resistance by the Africans in South West Africa in the period from 1907 to 1915. If this outstanding event is given only cursory treatment here, there are two reasons for this: For one thing, the strike was organized not by the Herero or Nama, but by Xhosa-speaking migrant workers from South Africa and, for another, it is dealt with at length in a fairly recent publication.⁴¹

What had happened, briefly, was this: When on 29 September 1910 a German construction firm once again paid the South African migrant workers on the Wilhelmsthal site lower wages than promised, the workers either downed tools or went on a go-slow in protest. Thereupon, the firm called in German troops who issued an ultimatum to the African labourers, demanding that they turn over three of their number who had acted as their spokesmen. When this demand was rejected, the soldiers staged a veritable massacre, leaving 14 dead and 25 wounded. But the resistance of the African workers at least had the result that the construction firm ceased to make unjustified wage reductions.

In September 1912 German troops captured 12 Africans and killed another in the immediate vicinity of the border. As it turned out, they were followers of Simon Kopper who had withdrawn to British-ruled territory. According to their testimony, they had been hunting big game near the border. It speaks volumes for the hysterical mood obtaining among the colonial authorities that they described this harmless hunting trip as "an operation that held grave dangers for peace in the Protectorate".⁴² The punishment administered was very harsh: two Nama were sentenced to death and the others to lengthy terms of imprisonment with hard labour.

Economic Changes in South West Africa, 1907-15

Economically speaking, the period 1907-15 was one of far-reaching change. Colonization of the territory by German farmers was proceeding apace. While in over 20 years of German colonial rule over South West Africa 480 farms had been sold

by early 1907, no less than 202 farms were sold in 1907 alone.⁴³ By the year 1913 the number of farms sold had risen to 1,331.⁴⁴ The white population, totalling a mere 3,701 people in 1903, had reached a figure of 14,840 by 1913.

But the decisive factor for South West Africa's economic development was the discovery of diamonds. After a futile search that had lasted for more than twenty years it was reported in 1908 that an African had come across diamonds in the Namib, not far from Lüderitz Bay. Since the site was on territory controlled by the German South West Africa Company, the patience of these "patriotic men" at last paid dividends – in the true sense of the word, for in 1909 the company paid its shareholders a dividend of 64 per cent.⁴⁵ In the same year its share prices went up by a staggering 2,000 per cent.⁴⁶ Similarly, the shares of the (British) South West Africa Company, the Otavigesellschaft and the South African Territories Company rocketed in value. While South West Africa remained a loss-making enterprise for the German taxpayer,⁴⁷ a number of monopolists still managed to squeeze huge profits out of the colony in the closing years of German colonial domination.

The outbreak of the First World War put an end to the profit bonanza German monopoly capital had enjoyed in South West Africa. The territory became the object of a bitter dispute between British and German imperialism.⁴⁸ The Rehoboth tribe, the so-called Bastards, who had collaborated with their colonial masters against the Herero and Nama throughout the period of German rule, refused to support the Germans any further on the outbreak of the war because they did not want to fight against the Union forces of the recently established Union of South Africa. In retaliation, the Rehobothers were attacked and disarmed by their one-time allies. It should also be noted here that, immediately after the beginning of the War, the German imperialists went ahead with their long-planned deportation of the Bondelswarts to the northern part of the territory.⁴⁹

As a result of the First World War, South West Africa changed hands, passing under the control of just another predatory imperialist regime. For the Herero and Nama this meant no improvement in their lot. They were, indeed, forced by the new rulers of the country to continue toiling for those who had hitherto been their colonial masters. What remained for the Herero and Nama was the bitter realization that, while imperialists were quite prepared to wage war against one another, they would in the end come to terms again on the basis of the joint oppression and exploitation of the African population.

Notes

1 DKZ, Vol. 24, 1907, p. 257.

2 Although the term "protectorate" had lost its meaning after the revocation of the so-called protection treaties, the German imperialists continued to use it to conceal the changes that had taken place.

3 Cf. DKBI, Vol. 18, 1907, pp. 1179 ff.

- 4 Marx, Karl, *Capital*, Vol. 1, Moscow, n.d., p. 166.
- 5 Bongard, Oskar, *Dernburgs Studienreise nach Britisch- und Deutsch-Südafrika*, in: DKZ, Vol. 25, 1908, p. 704.
- 6 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1229, p. 4, Otavagesellschaft to Bernhard Dernburg, 9 Dec. 1907.
- 7 Cf. Überhorst, Paul, *Die Arbeiterfrage in den deutschen Kolonien, Rechts- und Staatswissenschaftliche Dissertation* (thesis), Münster, 1926, p. 261.
- 8 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1229, pp. 54-5, Ratibor (German minister in Lisbon) to Bethmann-Hollweg, 4 March 1910.
- 9 Cf. *Vossische Zeitung*, 23 June 1910.
- 10 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1500, pp. 74-5, from the account of a journey made by Conze, senior official in the Imp. Col. Off., 1909.
- 11 Kütz, Wilhelm, *Arbeiternot und Eingeborenepflege in Südwestafrika*, in DKZ, Vol. 28, 1911, p. 282. Cf. also DSWAZ, 26 Nov. 1910.
- 12 Imp. Col. Off., File No. 2141, pp. 44-7, Schuckmann to the Imp. Col. Off., 10. Aug. 1909. The San were the target of a vicious press campaign. Cf. e. g. DKZ, Vol. 28, 1911, p. 773, and Vol. 29, 1912, pp. 88, 311 ff. and 334.
- 13 Cf. Müller, Fritz, ed., *Kolonien unter der Peitsche, Eine Dokumentation*, Berlin, 1962, p. 114.
- 14 Governor Seitz to the Imperial District Officer, 31 May 1912 (strictly confidential). Published in *Report*, p. 203.
- 15 Why these white thugs got off scot-free in the majority of cases can be seen from a report filed by the Imperial District Officer Boehmer in Lüderitz Bay. It says, *inter alia*: "The courts here have failed pitifully. When the evidence is overwhelming, a fine may be imposed in one or two cases. But inevitably there will be an appeal. . . . The defendant, having learned his lesson after the first judgement, will then modify his defence accordingly. Since natives are not considered credible witnesses whereas the testimony of whites, however dubious, is taken at face-value, the whole matter will end in a triumphant acquittal." Boehmer to the Imperial Administration in Windhoek, 21 April 1913, published in *Report*, p. 204.
- 16 This judgement was virulently attacked by the defendant's wife who, the court records show, had assisted her husband in his excesses. Back in Germany, she published a book in which she sought to play down and justify the crimes committed by her husband. Cf. Cramer, Ada, *Weiss oder Schwarz. Leber- und Leidensjahre eines Farmers in Südwest im Lichte des Rassenbasses*, Berlin, 1913.
- 17 The description given here of the Cramer affair is based on the judgement of the court of appeal which tried the case in Windhoek from 28 March to 4 April 1913. The text (in English) is given in *Report*, pp. 165-179.
- 18 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1662, pp. 171-2, Hintrager to the Imp. Col. Off., 30 Jan. 1909.
- 19 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1663, pp. 3-4, District Officer Wehle (Karibib) to the Administration in Windhoek, 30 Jan. 1909. The report added: "That the police sergeants gave the two natives . . . a couple of well-deserved clouts on the ear is something that no sensible person will hold against him, let alone interpret as maltreatment that would justify a complaint." For all these reasons the District Officer was obviously convinced that the whole matter should be laid to rest.
- 20 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1662, pp. 181-2, Report of Lieutenant Baron von Hirschberg on a conversation with Railway Director Morgenstern, 28 Jan. 1909.
- 21 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, p. 122, Lindequist to the Imp. Col. Off., 25 Aug. 1907.

- 22 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2140, pp. 124-6, Schuckmann to the Imp. Col. Off., 23 Sept. 1907.
- 23 Cf. e.g. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1662, pp. 177-8, which as late as January 1909 mentioned the possibility of all Herero leaving South West Africa for good. The widespread resort to flogging was listed as the chief factor that might induce them to emigrate. The report said: "They [the Herero - H. D.] look upon corporal punishment as a veritable scourge, sensitive as they are to being constantly kicked about, a practice very common among many settlers."
- 24 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2095, p. 131, Schuckman to the Imp. Col. Off., 27 Feb. 1908. As can also be gathered from the report, the seven Bondelswarts were to be resettled, after their extradition, from the extreme south of Namaland to Grootfontein (Nord) in Hereroland.
- 25 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2147, p. 9, Dernburg's memorandum, c. 28 Dec. 1908.
- 26 *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 16 Jan. 1909, quoted after DKZ, Vol. 26, 1909, p. 43.
- 27 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2147, p. 20, Humboldt to the Ger. For. Off., 4 Jan. 1909.
- 28 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2147, p. 21, Dernburg to the Ger. For. Off., 5 Jan. 1909.
- 29 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2147, p. 33, Hintrager to the Imp. Col. Off., 23 Dec. 1908.
- 30 Cf. *Deutsche Tageszeitung*, No. 589, 16 Dec. 1909.
- 31 Cf. Hintrager, Oskar, *Südwestafrika in der deutschen Zeit*, Munich, 1955, p. 105.
- 32 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2147, p. 33, Hintrager to the Imp. Col. Off., 23 Dec. 1908.
- 33 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2147, pp. 51-62, Hintrager to the Imp. Col. Off., 31 December 1908.
- 34 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2147, pp. 56-67, Hintrager to the Imp. Col. Off., App. 2, 22 Dec. 1908 [this writer's emphasis - H. D.].
- 35 In 1909 the Bondelswarts community consisted of 631 men, 695 women and 413 children. In the period 1910-13, their numbers rose to about 1,900 or 2,000.
- 36 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2141, pp. 31-2, Schuckmann to the Imp. Col. Off., 26 April 1909.
- 37 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2141, pp. 33-4, Lindequist's memorandum, n.d. Lindequist also had something else in mind when he proposed deporting the Nama to East Africa: "If they were transplanted this would presumably be a salutary lesson for the rather unpredictable Warusha and Wadshagga."
- 38 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, p. 119, Hintrager to the Imp. Col. Off., 1 March 1910.
- 39 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, p. 142, Kamerun Administration to SWA Administration, 22 Oct. 1911.
- 40 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2090, p. 141, Hintrager to the Imp. Col. Off., 1 Feb. 1912.
- 41 Cf. Loth, Heinrich, 'Zu den Anfängen des Kampfes der Arbeiter Südwestafrikas gegen den deutschen Imperialismus. Unveröffentlichte Dokumente', in *WZ*, Leipzig, Vol. 10, 1961, pp. 351 ff.
- 42 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2148, p. 5, Hintrager to the Imp. Col. Off., App., 17 Oct. 1912.
- 43 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 1200, p. 211, Schuckmann to Dernburg, 2 Oct. 1908.
- 44 Cf. Boetticher, Gerhard, *Die landwirtschaftlichen Produktions- und Siedlungsverhältnisse in Südwestafrika vor und nach dem Weltkrieg*, Rechts- und Staatswissenschaftliche Dissertation (thesis), Breslau, 1931, p. 108.
- 45 Cf. Erzberger, Matthias, '64 Prozent Dividende! Betrachtungen zum Diamantenrummel', in *Neue Börsenzeitung*, No. 217, 16 Sept. 1910.
- 46 Cf. *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 8 Sept. 1910. A comparison of the lists of Ger. SWA Co. share-

holders shows that the big banks took advantage of the upward trend in share prices to dispose of a major portion of their shares on favourable terms.

- 47 With the notable exception of Togo, none of the German colonies ever paid its way. Brunswick reckons that, if Germany had not lost her colonies, they would have become profitable undertakings between 1918 and 1939. Cf. Brunswick, Henri, *L'Expansion allemande outre-mer du XV^e siècle à nos jours*, Paris, 1957, p. 188.
- 48 For details of the war see Oelhafen, H. von, *Der Feldzug in Südwestafrika 1914-1915*, Berlin, 1923; Suchier, Walther, *Deutsch-Südwest im Weltkriege*, Berlin, 1918; Seitz, Theodor, *Südafrika im Weltkriege. Der Zusammenbruch in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, Berlin, 1920; Hennig, R., *Deutsch-Südwest im Weltkriege*, Berlin 1920, and Machado, Ernesto, *No Sul de Angola*, Lisbon, 1956.
- 49 Cf. DKZ, Vol. 32, 1915, p. 207.

Epilogue

Within years of their land having been conquered by British imperialism, the people of South West Africa were given a bloody demonstration reminding them that under the new rulers nothing had changed for them. In order to force the Bondelswarts into the service of white farmers, the authorities placed a tax of one pound sterling on the dogs indispensable for their hunting. This arbitrary act was fiercely opposed by the Bondelswarts. Matters came to such a pass that they detained a police officer, who had been charged with collecting the tax, for a prolonged period. Thereupon the Administrator, acting on behalf of the Union of South Africa, ordered the resistance to be suppressed by armed force.

Undaunted, the Bondelswarts accepted this military challenge. Indeed, in May 1922 they massed their forces, estimated at 400 to 500 men, in the Haib area (northwest of Warmbad). Their leader was Abraham Morris, well known from the great Nama uprising. During the First World War Morris had placed himself at the disposal of the Union forces, rendering them valuable services as a scout.¹

The laager in which the Bondelswarts were encamped was surrounded by a police force reinforced by white settlers and then, for several hours, subjected to bombing by military aircraft. Many women and children were killed in these raids. The bulk of the Bondelswarts, however, leaving behind their wives and children and their livestock, succeeded in breaking through the encirclement. Yet they were tracked down again and killed or taken prisoner after bitter fighting, Abraham Morris being among the dead. The other Bondelswarts leaders, who were captured while wounded, were later given long terms in prison on charges of high treason.²

Haug, the German Consul-General in South Africa, reporting the crushing of the Bondelswarts uprising, wrote in a despatch to the German Foreign Office: "The success the administration of the Protectorate has achieved is chiefly attributed to the use of modern means of warfare, notably motor vehicles and three aeroplanes sent from Pretoria into the area where the revolt was taking place. It appears to me that the planes, in particular, have rendered good service in reconnoitring the positions of the bands of natives, in maintaining liaison between the different police patrols, and in supplying them with water. Through the lavish use of bombs they have speeded up the process of wiping out the bands."³

The brutal handling of the affair by the new South West African authorities gave rise to a heated discussion at the League of Nations. The question was raised of whether a country exercising a mandate on behalf of the League was entitled to drop bombs on the inhabitants of the mandated territory for the only reason that they refused to pay a tax on dogs.⁴

Whatever illusions the people of South West Africa may still have entertained about their new colonial masters were dispelled by the suppression of the Bondelswart rising. It became abundantly clear to them that differences between imperialists were a matter of degree, not of principle. Where, before, they had been directly confronted with only one enemy—German imperialism—up to the First World War, they were henceforth facing two adversaries: their new colonial masters in the shape of the Union of South Africa and the German settlers who were exploiting and oppressing the Herero and Nama as before.

From the outset, the Union of South Africa had left no doubt whatsoever that it would pursue the *de facto* incorporation of South West Africa into the Union. But since the League of Nations was dominated by two old-established colonial powers—Britain and France—the Union of South Africa went along with the mandate system, submitting annual reports about the territory that were as vague as they were fragmentary. The experts on the Permanent Mandates Commission were powerless because the Commission could deal only with what the mandatory power saw fit to report. The opinion of the indigenous population was ignored.⁵ From 1933 onwards the Union demanded repeatedly that the League of Nations consent to the outright annexation of South West Africa.

The Nazi takeover in Germany in the 1930s had the result that, before long, the majority of German settlers in South West Africa turned fascist.⁶ Even though there was disagreement between German and South African imperialists in the 1930s about who should be the masters of the country, they saw eye to eye on the basic issue of jointly exploiting and oppressing the original inhabitants. Pointing out "that the views of the South African Boers on the racial question are the same as those of National Socialist Germany," General J. B. M. Hertzog, the South African Prime Minister until 1939, told a German agent in September 1940 why the Boers wanted to see a fascist victory in the Second World War: "With the future relationship between black and white in South Africa in mind, the Nationalists would like to see a situation arising in which Germany ruled over Central African territory stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean. They would look upon this German territory as a welcome barrier to other concepts on racial policy."⁷ Yet this was to remain wishful thinking, the hopes of the Boers being shattered by the Allied victory in the Second World War.

After the War the territories administered under League of Nations mandates were placed under the trusteeship of the United Nations, but the Union of South Africa refused to submit its mandated territory to control by the new world body. A decision on the matter was adjourned for a year, but in 1946 Pretoria reiterated its stance that integration would signify formal recognition of the current state

of affairs. In support of his claim, Prime Minister Jan Christiaan Smuts submitted the result of a so-called referendum, according to which the vast majority of the South West African people had voted in favour of incorporation into the Union. But the United Nations dismissed the referendum as a swindle⁸ and renewed its demand for a treaty whereby the territory would be placed under trusteeship. The Union failed to comply with this demand, but in 1947 produced its one and only report for the UN, covering the year 1946.

In 1948 the Nationalists under Daniel François Malan won the election in South Africa and at once set course towards the outright annexation of South West Africa. Rejecting the idea of trusteeship, they declined to draw up any further reports on the territory. In order to create a *fait accompli* they modified the Constitution of the Union to enable the white population of South West Africa to return six representatives to the South African House of Assembly. The 1950 elections marked a culminating point in the collaboration between the German settlers in South West Africa and the Afrikaner Nationalists. Indeed, the vote of the German settlers tipped the scale in favour of Malan, enabling him to institute his fascist racial policy of *apartheid* in the Union of South Africa and in South West Africa as well. We come full circle again when we recall that Senator Heinrich Vedder, the head of the Rhenish Mission in South West Africa, once remarked full of pride that it had been the Germans who introduced racial segregation in South West Africa. He said that the former German colony had been the only country in the world that had made *apartheid* the law of the land as early as fifty years ago.⁹

The people of South West Africa were well-advised to concentrate first on just one of their two enemies—the Germans—after the end of the Second World War. Among these it was primarily the Rhenish Missionary Society which had incurred the hatred of the Africans through their collaboration with the German and then the South African imperialists. In July 1946, at a time when the crushing of fascism by the Allied coalition had left the Germans in South West Africa in a very precarious situation, the Nama, in a spectacular move, dissociated themselves from the Rhenish Mission. This step, as even the Mission's staunchest supporters had to concede, was not taken on theological grounds, but exclusively for social and political reasons. Leading the breakaway movement were men like Petrus Jod and Markus Witbooi. Explaining their decision, one of the Nama leaders said: "A man cannot always crawl about among the cliffs. One day he must rise to his full height and walk with his head held high."¹⁰ The pattern was repeated nine years later when the Herero also left the Rhenish Missionary Society,¹¹ putting an end to over a hundred years of spiritual enslavement.

Running parallel, a number of political issues were moving into the forefront after 1945. In the post-war years politics was still the prerogative of the chiefs. So Ruth First was not so wrong in asserting that "the tribal chiefs monopolized the political scene".¹² In 1946 Herero Chief Hosea Kutako vainly asked the administration to allow him to send a deputation to the United States in order to report

about the situation in South West Africa before the United Nations. But an English clergyman, the Rev. Michael Scott, took it upon himself somewhat later to champion the interests of the Herero at the UN, a mission he was to carry out for many years.¹³ In numerous petitions the Herero demanded trusteeship status for the land of their birth, the restitution of their tribal lands, and better opportunities for education and training. The protest movement spearheaded by the chiefs marked the first stage of the struggle waged by the peoples of South West Africa against the colonial rule exercised by the Union of South Africa after the Second World War.

Under the impact of the powerful disobedience campaign launched in 1952 by the African National Congress against fascist repression in the Union of South Africa, numerous young South West Africans realized that in their country, too, it was necessary to set up political organizations going beyond the narrow confines of Hosea Kutako's council of chiefs. As a preliminary step, South West African students undergoing training in the Union founded the South West Africa Student Body in 1952. The aims of this organization were still predominantly cultural. In 1955 the Student Body was renamed the South West African Progressive Association (SWAPA). The change of name signalled their intention no longer to restrict it to pupils and students. As well as cultural aims, political and economic objectives were now being formulated.

In another development, a group of South West Africans working in South Africa and led by Herman Toivo Ja Toivo, met in Cape Town in 1958 to found the Ovamboland People's Congress (OPC). In April 1959 it was renamed Ovamboland People's Organization (OPO) with Sam Nujoma as its President.

There followed in September 1959 the establishment of the South West Africa National Union (SWANU), a successor organization to SWAPA. It was supported both by OPO and the council of chiefs as could be seen from the fact that the President and Vice-President of OPO and several members of the council were elected members of the SWANU Executive. Thus, all political forces of any importance had been united in a single organization.

About this time the Administrator gave orders for the African residents of the Old Location in Windhoek to be forcibly moved to the township of Katutura at some distance from the city. SWANU immediately assumed the leadership of a widespread movement of protest and boycott against the high-handedness of the Government. To subdue the protest movement, the South African rulers despatched police and army units to Windhoek. On the night of 10 December 1959 they entered the location, firing indiscriminately into the crowd and killing 12 Africans and wounding 45.¹⁴ This "South West African Sharpeville" was designed to suppress all stirrings of protest among the indigenous population.

Soon after its inception, SWANU got bogged down in a profound crisis when the long-standing conflict between the advocates of plans to make it a political party and the council of chiefs came to a head. The council wanted to determine SWANU's policies and to seek a solution to South West Africa's problems with

the aid of the United Nations, in which endeavour it had the backing of certain quarters in Britain and the USA. As an example, the American Committee on Africa considered it the main task of a political party in South West Africa to raise funds in support of its representatives at the United Nations.¹⁵

In early 1960 it became apparent that it was not possible to transform SWANU into a revolutionary party of the masses. Therefore, OPO withdrew from this body and reconstituted itself on 19 April 1960 as the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO).

SWAPO, led by its President Sam Nujoma, has since stood undisputedly in the van of the Namibian people's struggle for independence whereas SWANU dwindled into insignificance in a matter of years.

On 26 August 1966 SWAPO announced the launching of its armed struggle for liberation when Government forces were engaged near Fort Namutoni. In solidarity with Namibia and SWAPO, the UN decided that the 26th of August be henceforth observed as "Namibia Day". With support from the socialist countries, SWAPO succeeded in fashioning its armed forces into the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN).

The year 1966 witnessed yet another event of crucial importance for Namibia. In October of that year the UN General Assembly officially terminated South Africa's mandate, depriving the Republic of South Africa of any legal foundation for its presence in Namibia. Resolution 2145 reaffirmed the right of the Namibian people to political independence and stipulated that until the attainment of independence the territory would be directly administered by the United Nations. For this purpose the world body in 1967 created the UN Council for Namibia which was charged by the General Assembly with going to Namibia to assume its administrative functions. However, with the Republic of South Africa refusing it entry, the Council has so far been forced to operate from abroad.

In 1967 the UN General Assembly voted to redesignate South West Africa as Namibia, and in 1973 it recognized SWAPO as the authentic representative of the Namibian people.

The collapse of Portuguese colonialism after 1974 and the emergence of progressive independent nations such as Angola and Mozambique have radically changed the political scene in Southern Africa. The two newly independent countries ceased to be strongholds of imperialism, becoming instead a valuable source of support for the national liberation movement. Both the Republic of South Africa and the United States (as well as other imperialist powers) reacted very nervously to this development.

In September 1975 the Republic of South Africa convened a so-called Constitutional Conference (the Turnhalle Conference) in Windhoek where African collaborators taking their cues from Pretoria framed a constitution designed to perpetuate South Africa's control over Namibia.

However, the imperialist states realized from the outset that this was no realistic approach to a neo-colonialist formula for Namibia. They were determined, there-

fore, to put pressure on South Africa to try a different tack. They also had to bear in mind that in January 1976 the Security Council had adopted Resolution 385 which in no uncertain terms demanded South Africa's withdrawal from Namibia and the holding of free elections under UN supervision.

So in 1977 five Western members of the Security Council (the United States, Britain, France, Canada and the Federal Republic of Germany) embarked on protracted negotiations with Pretoria and SWAPO. Despite a measure of rapprochement on matters of detail, the fundamental differences remained. Ultimately, Premier Johannes Balthazar Vorster let the cat out of the bag with his statement that South Africa was not prepared to turn over Namibia to SWAPO.

Late in 1978 Pretoria, defying world opinion, brazenly proceeded to arrange elections which were a mere sham (SWAPO being excluded) and which, in fact, brought Pretoria little advantage because the puppet regime it installed cannot count on international recognition. SWAPO's answer was to step up its armed struggle. The Organization of African Unity reaffirmed its position that phoney elections cannot erase the fact that SWAPO remains the sole authentic voice of the Namibian people.

There can be no doubt that, with every day that passes, Namibia is moving closer to independence under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization.

Horst Drechsler 1979

Notes

- 1 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2158, pp. 121-2, Haug (German Consul-General for British South Africa) to the Ger. For. Off., 30 May 1922.
- 2 Cf. Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2158, p. 12, Haug to the Ger. For. Off., 13 June 1922, and Padmore, George, *Pan-Africanism or Communism? The Coming Struggle for Africa*, London (1956), pp. 135 ff. For the official version of the events described here cf. *Report of the Administrator on the Bondelswarts Rising, 1922*, Cape Town, 1922; *Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelswarts*, Cape Town, 1923, and *Memorandum by the Administrator of South West Africa on the Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the Rebellion of the Bondelswarts*, Cape Town, 1923.
- 3 Imp. Col. Off. File No. 2158, p. 123, Haug to the Ger. For. Off., 13 June 1922.
- 4 Cf. *New York Times*, 9 Sept. 1922.
- 5 Cf. First, Ruth, *South West Africa*, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1963, pp. 169 ff., Penguin African Library, Vol. 10.
- 6 Cf. Kühne, Horst, *Faschistische Kolonialideologie und zweiter Weltkrieg*, Berlin, 1962, pp. 119 ff., and Stuebel, Heinrich, 'Die Entwicklung des Nationalsozialismus in Südwestafrika', in *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, Vol. 1, 1953.
- 7 Foreign Office, Bureau of the Secretary of State, Files regarding Africa, Vol. 1, London P.R.O., Washington, D. C., Bonn Ser. No. 540, p. 240-626, quoted after Tillmann, Heinz, 'Tätigkeit und Ziele der Fünften Kolonne in Südafrika während des zweiten Weltkrieges'.

- in: *Zur Geschichte des Kolonialismus und der nationalen Befreiung*, special issue of ZIG, 1961, p. 193.
- 8 Cf. Scott, Michael, *A Time to Speak*, London, 1958, pp. 222 ff.
- 9 Cf. *Der Spiegel*, 24 Aug. 1960.
- 10 Cf. Schlosser, Katesa, *Eingeborenkirchen in Süd- und Südwestafrika, ihre Geschichte und Sozialstruktur*, Kiel, 1958, p. 86. Schlosser gives a detailed account of the Nama's break with the Rhenish Mission in 1946. *Ibid.*, pp. 71-124.
- 11 For details about the Herero's break with the Rhenish Mission in 1955 cf. the numerous articles published by G. Menzel, H.-G. Scholz and W. A. Wienecke in *Berichte der Rheinischen Mission*, edited by Hans de Kleine, Vols. 105, 1955, & foll.
- 12 First, Ruth, *op. cit.*, p. 196.
- 13 Cf. Scott, Michael, *op. cit.*, pp. 219 ff.
- 14 Cf. First, Ruth, *op. cit.*, 209, and Segal, Ronald, *Political Africa*, London, 1961, p. 440.
- 15 Cf. *South West Africa: The UN's Stepchild*, edited by the American Committee on Africa, New York, 1960, p. 13.

Abbreviations

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| Col. Dept. | Colonial Department |
| DKBl | Deutsches Kolonialblatt |
| DKG | Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft (German Colonial Society) |
| DKZ | Deutsche Kolonialzeitung |
| DSWAZ | Deutsch-Südwestafrikanische Zeitung |
| Ger. For. Off. | German Foreign Office |
| Ger. SWA Co. | German South West Africa Company (Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft für Südwestafrika) |
| HZ | Historische Zeitschrift |
| Imp. Col. Off. | Imperial Colonial Office |
| KhS | Kharaskhoma Syndicate |
| KJ | Koloniales Jahrbuch |
| SWA | South West Africa |
| SWA Co. | South West Africa Company |
| SWANU | South West Africa National Union |
| SWAPO | South West Africa People's Organization |
| WZ Berlin | Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Gesellschafts- und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe (Scientific Journal of Berlin's Humboldt University, Social Science and Linguistics Series) |
| WZ Leipzig | Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig, Gesellschafts- und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe (Scientific Journal of Leipzig's Karl Marx University, Social Science and Linguistics Series) |
| ZfG | Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft |
| ZKKK | Zeitschrift für Kolonialpolitik, Kolonialrecht und Kolonialwirtschaft (Journal for Colonial Policy, Law and Economics) |

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